A Married Priest

Albert Houtin

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A MARRIED PRIEST

[Charles Perraud]

BY

ALBERT HOUTIN

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TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH
BY
JOHN RICHARD SLATTERY

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NOTE

In its original French, this little book has reached several editions. Its appearance led to a great deal of discussion, in which some journals of Paris, e. g., *Le Matin*, *Le Siecle*, *L'Action*, took part, as also did the Catholic press, *La Croix*, *L'Univers*. The legal heir of Cardinal Perraud served warning upon and threatened suit against Mons. Houtin, the author, but failed to carry out his threat. A couple of bishops, the Rector of the Catholic Institute of Paris and some priests defended Charles Perraud by denying the marriage. The latter's own religious brethren — the Oratory of Paris — published in book form a reply which covered also the cases of Perreyve and Gratry. [See Chapters I and II of this work.] Its many authors refused to put their names to it — an anonymous work in defense of a great church discipline — celibacy.

Mons. Houtin's book, therefore, narrates the unique status of a celebrated French priest who entered into wedlock as best he could and yet held on to his official standing. By canon law and French law under the Concordat, the union of the Abbé Charles Perraud and Mme. Duval was no marriage. In their own eyes it was wedlock. Again, in every respect Charles Perraud was an exemplary priest, charitable, disinterested, and

wholly devoted to the incurable little waifs of Paris. He was a man of profoundly religious instincts and thoroughly good life.

The obligation of celibacy was created by Gregory VII — Hildebrand — but only for the Latin church. In the Greek church, the clergy are married, except the monks, who are celibates not because of the priesthood but by reason of their vows. The law of Gregory VII is to-day in force but now with greater effect than in his own time. For up to the Council of Trent, a priest could not lawfully marry, but since that event his marriage is not only unlawful but also invalid,— a status, moreover, holding in the civil law of all countries which have Concordats with Rome.

Many efforts have been made to get rid of celibacy. Gratry, who figures largely in the opening chapter of this life, sent a memorial for its abolition to the Vatican Council. It is said that a copy of this petition is in the archives of the Oratory of Paris, while Charles Perraud repeatedly asked his brother — Cardinal Perraud — to secure from Rome the abolition of celibacy in his own case. The Cardinal promised,— and *voila tout*. In the closing chapter, we have a footnote, in which Père Hyacinthe Loyson declares that Leo XIII offered to dispense himself and legalize his marriage upon condition that he would affiliate to some oriental Rite. When Cardinal Lavigerie started schools for training na-

tive Africans to the priesthood, he petitioned Rome to exempt them from celibacy; but in vain. In *La Revue du clergé francais* (Oct. 1902) Mgr. Le Roy, a bishop and Superior General of the Holy Ghost Fathers, declared that Protestant missionaries were more successful in Africa than Catholic and alleged two reasons chiefly. The first was the better training and higher culture of the Protestants and the second was that they were *married men*. In their homes they enjoyed an ease and a comfort and a help wholly lacking to the Catholic missionaries, much to their loneliness and failure. When in Rome in 1899, a prelate, now a bishop, both well informed and trustworthy, assured us that the South American bishops, when there assembled a year or so before, asked Rome to dispense their clergy from celibacy. According to our informant, this favor was conceded on the sole condition that if either the priest or his concubine was in danger of death, the pair might be married lawfully and validly. Of course if the sick party recovered the marriage would stand. For no matter what power the church may claim to enact laws and discipline against natural leanings she has never, so far as we know, held to the right or power to override natural laws. And marriage, according to her theologians, is one such law. She regulates, prevents, annuls marriages; but the bond itself is sacred in her eyes and she labors to find reasons for her rules and annulments outside of

and beyond wedlock. Whether this reasoning be sound or not, the South American concession is the entering wedge. This dispensation, however, is not recorded in the published acts and decrees of the Latin-American Council.

The canonical status of a priest covers not his private life; should a priest choose to have *une amie*, that is a matter of conscience, provided the relationship is not notorious and scandalous. In this last case only will a prudent and experienced bishop interfere. But should a priest marry, he incurs all manner of penalties. Charles Perraud, however, suffered no public penalties; in fact, his brother, Cardinal Perraud, named him a Canon of Autun, of which diocese he was bishop,— and this when married.

Now the onus of celibacy is assumed at the sub-diaconate, the lowest of the greater orders. Lined up before the consecrating bishop, the youths about to be ordained sub-deacons hear from his lips an address in which occur the following tragic declarations:

"If up to now you have been careless, hereafter be vigilant.
If up to now drunkards, hereafter be sober.
If up to now immoral, hereafter be chaste." [1]

[1] Si usque nunc somnolenti, amodo vigiles. Si usque nunc ebriosi, amodo sobrii. Si usque nunc inhonesti, amodo casti. ("De ordinatione Subdiaconi, Pontificale Romanum.")

Such are the words spoken by a celibate bishop to young men, who are as a rule well meaning, sober, and pure. In our day those expressions are archaic, but they speak louder than volumes of writings the opinion which the church had of her own newly ordained in the days of yore, when the liturgy was composed. They sound insolent, but no one, bishop, priest, deacon, or sub-deacon, pays any attention to that parrot-like utterance.

The Italian journal *Battaglie D'Oggi* has had for some months a referendum on the question of celibacy. Its correspondents write from all quarters of the Peninsula. Their views are twofold chiefly,— abolition of celibacy, or to leave it a question of personal preference. This journal is Catholic, even if liberal, and staunchly upholds the pretensions of Rome. This unusual discussion proves that celibacy is not as yet a dead issue.

Hereafter celibacy will be a question — a burning question for Rome. And nothing will force it more quickly than the emancipation of womankind. Celibacy assumes that woman is not fit to mate with the priest. Unhappily for herself, woman has done most to uphold the status. She is the most conservative element in life. The fickleness of women is a familiar claim, but in Church and State it is the women who have been the conservative force. Had women in the days of Gregory VII the position they enjoy to-day, there would never have been question of celibacy.

Of old, she was the *semen immundum*. The serpent coaxed her to eat the apple. And coupled with this legend was the other of the virginal birth of Jesus. To-day, however, the higher criticism, or better, the science of historical evidence, has proven that in Nazareth Joseph, Mary, and Jesus were the same kind of family as those of the other inhabitants.

Now, when women are coming into their own, celibacy will find its pit-fall. In bygone Christian ages womankind was *nil*, politically, civilly, economically. To-day womankind can conduct business, own and inherit property, make wills, — in a word, play and act the citizen, save in regard to the ballot. Once suffrage is won — and won it shall be — the church will shelve her celibacy. In that day her canonists will find as many and as sound reasons in favor of priestly marriages as heretofore they had defended in behalf of celibacy. It is the same in canon law as in theology. When a law is outlived and outworn, to wheel around becomes an easy change.

THE TRANSLATOR.

PREFACE

Mons. Hyacinthe Loyson entrusted to me the documents which he had relating to the great religious crisis that began with the pontificate of Pius IX, with full permission to make such use of them as I deemed well of.

Those here published seem to me to offer a special interest. They concern one of the most curious figures of the French clergy, and at the same time affect one of the gravest rules of ecclesiastical discipline. Charles Perraud's conduct in regard to this regulation may be criticised; but it was joined for many years to a great piety. In publishing this fact, I fancy that I am not far from his mind. He stood up bravely against the falsification of Church history, as frequent among contemporary biographies as in the hagiography of the past. Specially did he blame Perè Gratry, his venerated master, for having written the life of their mutual friend, the Abbé Perreyve, and there insisting on the latter's enthusiastic devotion to clerical celibacy, when he accepted its yoke while he passed over in silence the love, full of sorrow, which was the great trial of his last years.

My effort, however, is only a study of history and religious psychology. It brings to light simply a fact, interesting in itself and interest-

ing also because it is much more common than many wish to believe and very different from that which many others fancy. Granting even that discussions come out of this little work, no practical consequence can be drawn therefrom. This fact, too, makes my mind easy. It is understood, therefore, that I publish these documents solely to narrate and not to enter upon discussion with any one, or to raise a general question.

THE AUTHOR.

Paris, France.

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A MARRIED PRIEST

I

VOCATION

1831–1870

Charles Alexis Perraud was born January 13th, 1831, at Bayonne, where his father was then in garrison. Captain Perraud, who had started a simple soldier at Waterloo, came originally from French-Comté. Madame Perraud was the daughter of the Chief Judge of a Chamber of the Royal Court, now known as the Court of Appeals at Bourges.[1]

He passed his boyhood first at Versailles, afterwards at Paris, whither his role as officer had led his father. At the catechism classes of Saint Sulpice, where he made his first communion, and at the Royal College, now Lycée, of St. Louis, where he was a pupil, he had schoolmates who became life-long friends,— the Abbé Eugéne Bernard, who died curé of Saint-Jacques du Haut-Pas and the Abbé Henry Perreyve, who died a professor of the Sorbonne. His dearest friend, however, was his brother, Adolphe-Louis, older

[1] L'abbé Charles Perraud, par Augustin Largent, prêtre de l'Oratoire (Paris, Chapelliez, 1895, in-12, 110 p.).

by three years. Rarely were two brothers so devoted to each other, but in their mutual love the tender-hearted Charles was ever giving in.

After finishing humanities, Charles studied law along with Perreyve. Legal science offered no attraction to them. Perreyve, on the very day of his first communion, had determined to consecrate himself to God. When nineteen years of age, Charles Perraud, also, fancied that he had heard the call from on high and made up his mind to become a priest. Somewhat later, when his brother resolved to enter a congregation, he thought that in it also should he enter upon the sacred ministry. The parents, however, of the two youths wished to try their juvenile vocations and refused to permit them to carry out at once their plan. Only on November 1st, 1853, was Charles allowed to go and join his brother at the re-opened Oratory, rue du Regard. At the same time Perreyve joined along with him.

Following his ordination, November 19th, 1857, his superiors assigned Charles Perraud to preaching, for which he seemed gifted. Between 1860 and 1870 he preached a great deal both in the Provinces, e. g., at La Rochelle, Orleans, Grenoble, Rheims, Lyons, and elsewhere, even at Paris. In spite of his success, his happiness in the religious life did not last long. He had the misfortune to be separated from Perreyve, whose frail constitution was not able to stand the rule of the Oratory, although in no wise austere.

Henry left, went to Rome to finish his studies and became one of the Clergy of Paris. He advanced rapidly, was named second chaplain of the College of St. Louis, assistant at the Church of St. Thomas Aquinas, and lastly Professor of Church History at the Sorbonne. Work and a pure, deep love wore out his frail body. He was in love with the daughter of a friend, a fatherless orphan, who had grown up before his eyes into a charming young lady. In despair he repeated: "There is then no country in the world where a Catholic priest in marrying can remain such." Upon his death-bed he demanded urgently to see the dear one who had stirred up his passion. Her mother, who knew the secret of the Abbé's longings, asked her confessor if she might bring her daughter for a visit. The confessor in a determined way forbade it and the agony of Perreyve in consequence became more desolate. He gave up the ghost June 26, 1865, aged 34 years.

The leading writer of the Oratory, Père Gratry, set to work at once to narrate this touching career.[1] He pictured him as an ideal priest and enlarged upon the way in which Perreyve dwelt upon the happiness of "virginal souls." But every vestige of the love affair was left out. Much as he loved Gratry, Charles Perraud could not keep from blaming this omission. "He has shown," said he, "Perreyve happy in his celibacy.

[1] Henry Perreyve (Paris, Douniol, 1866. in-80).

He deceives his readers, and in particular the youth who enter into the priesthood." [1]

Alas, at this same time, Charles Perraud began to understand that he himself also, in taking the ecclesiastical yoke, " loaded himself with too heavy a burden." [2] He dreaded lest the chief motive of his vocation might not have been the longing, unconscious and hasty, of striving after a love of the Ideal with Henry Perreyve and his brother. A deep melancholy possessed him, which made community life intolerable. In October, 1866, he left the house of the Oratorians to live with Père Gratry in a calm and splendid apartment, rue Barbet-de-Jouy.

In this house, whence his preachings called him forth quite frequently, Charles Perraud found no peace. With the coming of the Vatican Council, Catholics began to boil over in a great white heat of dogma and absolutism, which brought much suffering to him, sentimental and liberal as he was. He felt out of place more than ever among a clergy, positive and haughty. Some experiences brought home to him the incongruity.

[1] It is interesting to read Gratry's book in the light of this statement, specially the passages treating of the question of error in a vocation (pp. 53–60), of Love's transfixion (pp. 77–88), and finally of Perreyve dead in a " sacred joy " (p. 85) and however " in terror " (p. 213). As to his death, Gratry wrote in the same style: " We must be absolutely truthful in all things and above all here." His book is not a biography: it is a romance.

[2] Letter to Père Hyacinthe, May 1st, 1870.

Wednesday of Holy Week, 1869, he preached in favor of peace and was much reproached for it.[1] Somewhat later, Père Gratry and he were publicly found fault with by the Superior-General of the Oratory for having assisted at the Peace Conference.[2]

In spite of such failure, he was enough of a dreamer to look forward to the abrogation of clerical celibacy. He determined to draft a memorial in favor of this for the Vatican Council. He fancied such a step would prove extremely helpful. His feelings were so strong, he wrote to Père Hyacinthe (May 1st, 1870) that granting even that his own death was near, he would none the less ask for the rest what he would not dare request for himself. Learning about the same time (end of April, 1870) that Père Hyacinthe Loyson was about to pass a few days with Doellinger, he begged the visitor to submit a resumé of his researches and conclusions to the il-

[1] L'Evangile de Paix. Sermon preached at Saint Roch, March 24th, 1869. The sermon was in behalf of a work not included in the scope of the regular course.

[2] This conference raised a great hue and cry. It was thought in fact that it might have prevented the war, which then seemed imminent. Two weeks before the conference, June 12th, 1869, Charles Perraud wrote to Mons. Frederick Passy: "You are aware that war within three weeks is spoken of. Would that I had the ability to speak and write *everywhere* against this abominable and wrongful project. Let us then unite as the League of Peace to stir up from now on for the next fifteen days public opinion against this war, which despotism demands but which strikes horror to all the sons of liberty."

lustrious theologian and ask his advice. This Père Hyacinthe did and recorded the answer in his journal May 13th, 1870. Doellinger, thoroughly imbued in ecclesiastical tradition, which was the gauge of his life and principles, answered: "There is not in all ecclesiastical tradition *a single example* of a priest married after his ordination." This answer was so much the less satisfactory to Charles Perraud, as he had found a companion fit to bring him happiness. She was yet young, having just passed her thirtieth year, both a widow and childless, for her boy died when seven years old.[1] Like her director, she was pious and timid. They both strove against their mutual love till it became so strong as to result in their looking upon clerical celibacy as an enactment against nature. What was to be done? This stiff question they had before them for a long while without having the courage to face it. When consulted by them Père Hyacinthe answered that their duty was to break off at once or marry simply and honestly, like their fellows. Neither one nor the other had the courage to do so. But to rejoice in a wider liberty Charles Perraud, about June, 1870, renounced his membership in the Oratory.

[1] Rosalie-Eugenie Raymond, born at Bordeaux about 1837, married Baptiste Elias Duval. Their child, Elias, died in Paris, Feb. 28th, 1869. [The Oratorians state that she had been a servant of Mme. Perraud, the mother of Adolphe and Charles and it was at his mother's house that Charles first knew Rosalie.— Tr.]

II

TRYING YEARS

1870–1872

After his canonical release from the Oratory, Charles Perraud still continued to live with his dear master and friend, Père Gratry, who also had left the Oratorians. As the latter had flung himself headlong into the discussions opposed to the dogma of Papal Infallibility, the Oratory, fearful of being compromised by such outspoken opposition, released him of all his obligations.[1]

The two ex-oratorians lived in the closest harmony. They were in perfect accord upon all subjects, and Charles Perraud was not less opposed to the work of the Council than his master. When their mutual friend, Père Hyacinthe, went to bring to the newspaper, *La France*, his protest against the newly defined dogma, Charles Perraud hesitated not to accompany him, in clerical dress, even to the editorial chair.[2]

[1] For these details, see the "Vie de Gratry," by Père Chauvin (Paris, Bloud, 1901) and M. E. Ledrain, "Portraits et Souvenirs," 1869–1870. *Revue Bleue,* March 29th, April, 5th, 1902.

[2] This protest was reprinted in the work "De la Réforme Catholique" (1874), pp. 27–31. The Diary of Père Hyacinthe furnishes the proof of the perfect understanding which then existed between Charles Perraud and himself. We add a few extracts:

The war with Germany soon put aside the theological discussions. The son of the soldier of Waterloo regretted that he could not shoulder a musket, but he offered the service that lay in his power, and when, at the commencement of the siege of Paris, the National Guard was mobilized into marching battalions, he offered himself as chaplain to the Colonel of the 17th battalion, who accepted him with pleasure. On December 2nd the battalion took part in an engagement at the railroad station Aux Bœufs and for many weeks it was charged with the advanced

June 1, 1870. Lunch at P. Gratry's. Composed with him and P. Charles Perraud a letter for *L'Univers.*

June 11th. Dinner at the Abbé Bernard's, Chaplain of the Normal School, and P. Charles Perraud.

June 28th. Foundation in my person of a new order *l'Ordre de la Vérité.* Its spirit should demand an absolute and practical devotion to the reign of Truth among men. Its motto is: "God and Humanity in Jesus Christ."

July 5th. P. Charles Perraud offered himself to God with me in the *Ordre de la Vérité.* Upon our knees we said together the "Our Father" in Père Gratry's private chapel.

July 9th. Talk on the Breviary with P. Charles Perraud.

July 28th. Made ready my protest against the Infallibility of the Pope. Visit to the Archbishop of Paris, to whom I read it. Dinner at P. Gratry's. Chat with the straightforward and courageous Charles Perraud.

July 30th. My protest against the pretended dogma of Papal Infallibility appeared this evening in *La France* and will appear to-morrow in *Les Débates.* I am much warmed up but very peaceful. Full of joy. A great duty is done. I feel myself at once so free and so catholic. P. Charles Perraud accompanied me to the office of *La France,* where I brought my protestation.

posts of Vitry. During all this time the chaplain showed his pluck and courage. He pleased the official staff by his spirit and lightheartedness and he spent his days in rounds of visits among the squads in their encampments, doing for the men such little services as were in his power.

"January 19th, 1871, the 17th battalion took an active part in the battle of Buzenval. Led by its gallant colonel, it was at the head of the attacking column which rescued the village park. That day the Abbé Perraud, like all the officers and soldiers, had his part in their heroism and loyalty. From three o'clock in the morning he was on the march with the troops and up to midnight he was still at his post on the farm of La Fouilleuse, where was the ambulance." [1]

The defeat of France left on the patriotic soul of Charles Perraud an ever open wound. A short while later another great sorrow took hold of his personal affections — the death of Père Gratry. The last months of this philosopher were wretched. Stricken by a mortal illness, he sought relief at Montreux, Switzerland. Alone,

[1] These details were given by Colonel de Crisenoy, himself, to M. l'Abbé Lacroix, who quoted them in a conference delivered in the church of St. Ambrose, March 10, 1892. "M. l'Abbé Charles Perraud, sa vie et ses œuvres" (Paris, Chapelliez, 1892, 80. p. 31). M. Lacroix, later on bishop of Tarentaise (1901–1907), followed Charles Perraud in giving the conference at St. Ambroise.

[After resigning his see, the Government named bishop Lacroix as a professor at the Sorbonne.—Tr.]

without much money, unfit to take care of himself, he soon fell into a pitiable state. Charitable ladies noticed this priest, who seemed abandoned, and hastened to provide for his comforts. Worn out by his sickness and annoyed by letters from Père Adolphe Perraud, who begged him unceasingly to submit to the definitions of the Vatican Council, Gratry ended by sending his adhesion in writing to Mgr. Guibert, the new archbishop of Paris. The letter runs thus:

MONTREUX, VAUD, (Switzerland),
November 25th, 1871.

MONSEIGNEUR:

If I had not been very ill and unable to write I would have long before this, sent you my expressions of welcome.

To-day at least I wish, Monseigneur, to tell you simply that which it strikes me there is no need to say, namely, that I accept with all my brother priests the decrees of the Vatican Council. Whatever on this matter I have written previous to and contrary to these decrees, I withdraw.

Kindly, Monseigneur, send me your blessing and pray for me.

A. GRATRY.
Priest of the diocese of Paris.

Hardly had this submission gone, than he felt the need of explaining it to those who had admired his opposition. On November 28th he wrote to M. Legouvé, his colleague in the French Academy:

I fought inspired infallibility, the decree of the Council rejects inspired infallibility. I fought personal infallibility, the decree favors official infallibility. Writers of the school that I look upon as excessive did not want infallibility *ex cathedra* as being too limited. The decree stands for infallibility *ex cathedra*. I would dread almost scientific infallibility, political or government infallibility. The decree, however, declares for doctrinal infallibility only in matters of faith and morals. All this means not that I have not been guilty of errors in my discussions. Doubtlessly I have been guilty of some both in this matter and in others, but once I recognize my error I blot it out and feel no humiliation therefrom.[1]

[1] This letter was published whole for the first time by Père Ingold in *Demain,* Feb. 22nd, 1907. Père Chauvin and Cardinal Perraud in their lives of Gratry only gave its least interesting part. I here reprint only the postscript. In the *Revue internationale de Théologie,* April 1907, Dr. E. Michaud thus appreciates it: "It is worth remarking upon these entirely sincere statements, so much the more sincere as coming from a dying man, worn out by sickness and the advices of week-kneed friends: 1st. That he used indifferently the words 'decision' and 'decree' while he used neither the word 'definition' nor the word 'dogma'; it is therefore in his eyes only a simple decree. 2nd. That the words 'blot out,' used on purpose to mark his submission to the decree, is in no wise synonymous with 'retract,' still less so with 'refute.' 3rd. That he insists upon this, that the infallibility doctrine in matters of faith and morals is neither scientific, nor politic, nor governmental, nor inspired, nor personal, but only official and limited by *ex cathedra,* and he guards against pointing out what *ex cathedra* demands. 4th. That his single intention was not to separate himself from the Church. He says not from the Pope or the Papacy, or

On January 9th, he wrote of his own initiative to Doellinger, who had not written to him since his retraction: [1]

Dear Worthy and Honorable Friend.

Deeply know I what I do and I adore the truth alone. I ask you to be absolutely convinced of this. I would prove it in a striking way, were I able to work. But this note almost exhausts my strength of a day. Say this to P. Hyacinthe. I repeat it strongly: *Servant and Worshiper of the Truth alone.* Behold what I have been from infancy till to-day. My best and cordial regards,

A. Gratry.

On January 11th he wrote likewise to M. Frederic Passy the following hitherto unpublished letter:

even the Roman Church,— only *from the Church.* Did Gratry confound the *Church* with the Pope and the Papacy? Certainly not. With the Roman Church? Perhaps. Perhaps, too, he had not studied to the bottom, as was usual in France in 1871, the reasons of this distinction. However, the confusion in itself is serious and to-day will not stand. It is clear that the Roman Church is only a particular church, that it is not even the Catholic church of the West; therefore it is not the Catholic Church."

[1] In his life of Gratry, by a confusion hard to explain in an ordinarily exact historian, Père Chauvin assigns (p. 457) to Doellinger a letter of Père Hyacinthe, dated December 23rd, 1871, and published by Père Hyacinthe in his book, "De La Reforme Catholique," pp. 46–49. Père Chauvin assigns also (p. 458) to Père Hyacinthe a letter which is not his. Père Hyacinthe wrote only one letter to Gratry, that of December 23rd, 1871. He got no direct answer; but he had one indirectly in Gratry's letter to Doellinger, here quoted.

Dear Friend:

Judge not. Deeply know I what I do and I have no strife in my conscience and *I worship the truth alone.*

This would become clear as day to you, if I had a few hours for the needful labor. But this note is almost all that I can do in one day. I can not dictate. God bless you and judge not before understanding.

A. Gratry.

On January 20th he wrote to Madame Merriman, who soon afterwards became the wife of Père Hyacinthe Loyson, the following letter:

Montreux, Vaud (Switzerland),
January 20th, 1872.

Oh, Friend and Sister, what a joy to me was your letter. Save one word that I understand not or admit not. You know my unending groan since our separation. I grieved at not having made you like myself; at not seeing you inoculated with my convictions. But thanks to God, I find you again. I feared to refind you hard and severe. This is why for almost a month I shunned writing to you. But thanks to God, here you are, Child of Heaven. I did not know of your illness. Alas! Alas! For myself I can as yet perhaps be cured, but I rely not much upon that. I suffer dreadfully. But you, I trust that you will live. Live and know well and hold this firmly, it is truer than any one knows. From my childhood I am the fervent servant, the scrupulous worshiper of Truth alone, and this to my last breath. Know this well and rejoice

over it. Deeply know I what I do and I adore my saintly spouse — *the Truth.* I have not been killed by the Moral code.[1] Behold in peace, in calmness, in knowledge I enjoy a power of enormous resistance. The fall of France, without as well as within, has affected me very much. But Church affairs I gave myself to from my youth, and I distinguish that which must be maintained and that which God will destroy root and branch.

A. Gratry.

I bless you from the depths of my heart. *Au revoir* till we meet, at any rate in heaven.[2]

On learning how serious was Père Gratry's state of health, Charles Perraud hastened to him. On January 17th he arrived at Montreux. Five days later he wrote to M. Frederic Passy the following, hitherto unpublished, letter:

January 22nd, 1872.

Dear Sir:

P. Gratry, to stay with whom I came a few days ago, charges me to write to you and I am very happy at his entrusting to me this task. As to the news I have to send you of our poor patient, it is, alas, as sad as possible. Daily the sickness grows

[1] M. Hyacinthe Loyson explains this phrase: "I know that in this Père Gratry deceived himself. His friends recalled what he had said when writing his courageous letter: *'They will condemn me and I will die of it.'*"—De La Reforme Catholique," p. 56.

[2] This letter M. Hyacinthe Loyson published in part in his book, "De La Reforme Catholique," p. 56. I give it here as it appears in his journal under date of Feb. 17th, 1872.

evidently worse! The difficulty in swallowing and in speaking increases, the tumor ceases not to grow, and without a miracle the issue, fatal and perhaps near at hand, is inevitable. His sharp sufferings are not continual; but what terrible moral anguish.

Up to now, in his resignation, sweetness and courage, Père Gratry is wonderful. His great and fine mind shines in all its brightness. He busies himself always with ideas, and were it not for the extreme difficulty he has in speaking Theology would often be to the front. In this respect he charges me to ask of you some explanations on what you said to him in your last letter in regard to M. L. Veuillot and the liberties which the latter recently ventured upon in speaking of the Pope. P. Gratry asked myself what I knew about it and I had to acknowledge that I knew nothing at all.

You will do a charity, dear sir, in answering him as soon as possible and in forwarding to him the Articles of L. Veuillot, if you have them. Our poor patient has not lost all hope of cure. Hence then, in writing to him, kindly bear this in mind. Need I ask you to pray for him? God is all powerful. He could preserve for us the great and beautiful soul. At any rate, ask that the grace of this supernatural peace in which he lives and suffers may be his unto the end.

Accept, dear sir, my affectionate and devoted regards.

CHARLES PERRAUD.

This address is enough:

LE R. P. GRATRY,
Vernex-Montreux, Switzerland.

P. S.—P. Gratry charges me to say to you that he has just finished a bit of writing wherein he explains the reasons and specially the nature of his submission to the Council's decree. He has already given, in brief, these explanations in a letter to M. Legouvé, who, unhappily and without my knowing why, has not consented to have this letter published. As for myself, I was not with Père Gratry when he sent his letter to the Archbishop of Paris. I regret very much that he started in with that. It would have been better had he begun by publishing the writing that I read but a few days ago. In it are exact statements and distinctions of very great weight, especially in a question where every shade of meaning carries considerable weight. In every way would it be a mistake to suppose that P. Gratry has set aside all evidence. May God leave him time to say upon this subject all that I know he would desire to say.

The crisis of the patient soon shut out all hope. Charles Perraud informed his brother, who arrived January 30th. Gratry died in their arms February 7th.

What became of those final explanations, upon which Gratry so much counted? His literary heir, Adolphe Perraud, Cardinal-Bishop of Autun, took good care never to publish them, even in the brochure, which he entitled "Le P. Gratry, His Last Days, His Spiritual Testament." (Paris, Douniol, 1872.)

III

THE SECRET MARRIAGE

1872–1873

After Gratry's death, Charles Perraud felt himself alone. The loneliness crushed him. After some months of a dreadful strife with his scruples, he made up his mind to marry, if not in public, at least "before the Lord."

One morning in July, 1872, Madame Duval — such was the name of his choice — received communion at his hand, and after mass at once entered the sacristy, where he gave her a blessing which both regarded as the seal of their union.[1]

The newly married couple left on a short honeymoon, as it would be called usually, spent at Brussels. Père Hyacinthe, who by that time had concluded to give the example of a public marriage, learned of his friend's step, and was asked his opinion about it. He sent him the following letter:

[1] Only one other case of such self-made marriage do we know of,— that of Urbain Grandier, Curé of Loudun, who married himself at night in his parish church of St. Peter, Loudun, to Madeleine de Brou. Grandier was burned alive under Richelieu. The charge was that he had bewitched an Ursuline nun of Loudun.— Tr.

Paris-Passy, Aug. 3d, 1872.

My Dearest Friend:

Your letter touches me deeply. I would not love you as I do, if I would not speak out to you in all frankness and sincerity. Pardon me then and listen to me. You are weak of will, I was going to add, of conscience. You fear to put yourself at odds with the Church and you see not how you put yourself in strife with God. You are aware that never in any wise have I pushed you on to this great and solemn act. On the contrary, I told you that if you could, in a spirit of generosity and irrevocably, put aside once and for all your dreams, it would perhaps prove better, because of the backsliding and weakness of your character. To this alone I exhorted you, viz: Come to some decision. What I condemned and what I now condemn is this unhealthy state, this atmosphere, in my eyes noisome, wherein I see two souls destroying one another. God be pleased that you fell not into it sooner.

When you left Paris, without acknowledging your act and without desiring for it the signs of legality and dignity that should belong to it, I concealed not my sorrow nor hid my blame. I was fearing, as has happened, that God would not bless such conduct.[1] At all times I based my hope upon your re-

[1] Madame Duval fell sick at Brussels. On April 23rd, 1907, apropos of this letter that I had M. Hyacinthe Loyson re-read, he wrote me: "It would be absurd to charge God with the responsibility of the unending fruitless martyrdom which my two friends suffered. It would not be even just to attribute it to the law of clerical celibacy. If Charles Perraud, swayed by the force of 'Catholic' prejudices which he could not shake off, believed himself bound by the obligation of celibacy, he should have ac-

flections and soon a letter from you comes to confirm me in these hopes. You speak to me "of new duties which you have contracted before God and which rank before all other duties, which day by day can increase and before whose fulfillment, cost what it may, you will not fail." And now only four or five days later, all this seems forgotten. You lose your head and heart before the opposition of your friends, which you should have foreseen and which you are about to justify. Again you are making ready to return to Paris, like a schoolboy after a prank. And such a prank. Instead of supporting and enlightening your companion by hiding from her your own troubles, you add your weaknesses to the weight of hers and you help to drag down into stupid terrors that conscience, a yet poorly enlightened one. This it is which is known as *Catholic morality, priestly conscience,* all the while without realizing that no greater injury can be inflicted upon the Church and the priesthood. I will remain your friend even to the end, nothing will separate me from your poor soul, victim of its own weakness, but *so upright and so generous!* Depend upon my love till death itself, but if you enter

cepted it bravely, without striving to escape it by a secret marriage, which could give neither peace of soul nor joy of heart. If, on the contrary, as he really thought, he was within his rights as a man and a Christian in marrying her whom he honestly loved, he should have put, without hesitancy, the law of God above that of man. The truth is that the dreadful sufferings in which his life was passed arose because of a will too weak for a deed of duty, difficult and perhaps heroic. I blamed my friend; above all, I felt for him. I loved him none the less,— I may add,— almost venerated him."

upon this way which is unworthy of you and which will be without a future, spare me, I beg of you, and ask my advice no more.

I have put off my leaving until Wednesday morning, Aug. 7th. If you wish to see me, you have still time, and if you wish to pass through incognito, I offer you a share of my little home.

For me, I am going to be away quite a while and during the time will take probably an important step. Far from stopping me, the sad and weak-kneed adventure of which I am the confidant would give me new strength.

Adieu, dear, good, poor friend. I embrace you with the greatest tenderness and I am entirely,

Yours in the Lord,

HYACINTHE.

It was at Brussels that the Abbé Charles Perraud saw in the newspapers the ringing letter in which M. Hyacinthe Loyson thought it a duty to explain to the public the marriage which he had entered upon legally and publicly at London.

Stubbornly loyal to the prinicples of the Catholic Church, he declared:

I am not in any wise bound by her abuses, and among the very worst of these must be ranked perpetual vows. The error of Luther lay not in the chaste and pious marriage, which the most of those who cursed him should have imitated, it was only in his breaking away from the legitimate traditions and necessary unity of the Church.

Yes, I am sure France, like the Church, has need of the example which I give and of which the fu-

ture, failing the present, will gather the benefit. I know the exact state of my country, and when it was willing to listen to my voice I ceased not to preach to it the salvation of the family. Putting aside without regret the rich and deceitful veil of its prosperity, I would lay bare the two wounds which corrode it and which, both one and the other, breed marriage without love and love without marriage, and this means marriage and love without Christianity. (Conference of Notre Dame, on the Family, 1866.)

I know also the real state of our clergy. I know what they can be in devotedness and virtue, but I am not unaware how great the need among many of them to be put in touch with the interests, longings, and duties of human nature and civil society. Only by betaking himself from a blind asceticism and from a Church more political than religious will the priest, once again man and citizen, find himself at the same time a true priest. "Let him govern his own house," said Saint Paul, "keeping his children in submission and in every sort of honesty: For if a man knoweth not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God?" (I Tim. iii, 4, 5.)

Behold the reform without which, I dare say, every other will prove vain and empty. Leave the spirit of God, if we believe in his power, to keep up among us an elite of priests and sisters whose celibacy, ever free and voluntary, would be a state of purity — a state of joy, or at least of peace in sacrifice. But meanwhile let us hasten the day when the law of the Church and that of France will recognize, in liberty, in chastity, in dignity, the

marriage of the priest, that is to say: the gathering around a model hearthstone of all the strength of the family and all the power of religion.[1]

Shortly afterward, apropos of this document, Charles Perraud wrote to his friend the following letter, in which he resorted to some tricks of his pen in order to escape detection should it be lost:

Like everybody else, I read the letter in which you announced your decisive step. I regret that our friend X. (i. e., Charles Perraud himself,—Tr.) is so circumstanced that it is simply impossible for him to act as openly as you did. His case is different from yours and his conscience, moreover, burdens him with different duties. However that may be, you know in what measure his heart beats with yours and also in what measure he hopes for us, for himself, for a great number of others, a future better and more suitable to the true interests of Catholicism. For my part, I heartily congratulate you upon the clear language in which you declare that you intend to remain a Catholic. The

[1] This letter, dated Aug. 25th, 1872, was published in the *Temps,* Sept. 3d, the day when M. Hyacinthe Loyson was married in London.

(To the translator, the doctrinal, if he may use the term, part of this letter is absurd. What guaranty could any man give that the home of a married priest, any more than any other man's, would be a model? Does not the wife count? In this as in all other matters priests would be neither better nor worse than their fellows. Goodness never yet went by caste or followed professional lines.— Tr.)

more I reflect, the more am I convinced that the truth lies in this. Fight with unconquerable energy the abuses in the Church; love, defend, and serve the Church herself with an energy none the less unconquerable. X. (Charles Perraud) charges me to say to you that he suffers from being obliged to remain *for a time* under a certain mystery, and thus act in a way quite the reverse of yours. He is not free in that matter, but he feels sure that later on everything will be made clear. Unhappily, for some years he has been in a state of exhaustion that he relishes not and only asks what he terms an honorable release and a merited rest. He would wish, more than all, to be silent and be forgotten, at least until such time as he might in some way regain his health and strength. The reform also that he would ask, if he wrote, would be less radical, and specially less hurried than yours. But in truth every soul, led by the light of its conscience and the call of God, marches as best it may.

I ask you to keep on praying for us and I beg of God to give you every blessing.[1]

Charles Perraud's marriage was not a happy one. If their love was at all times the same, still she was always worrying in fear lest the public

[1] Letter from Brussels, Sept. 7th, 1872. On the 19th of the same month, M. Hyacinthe Loyson, on his way to Cologne to attend the Congress of Old Catholics, saw at Brussels the Abbé Perraud and his companion. "They pass," wrote he in his journal, "their honeymoon in secret, rather their foolish and painful *escapade*." Madame Duval was still ill and M. Loyson saw them in their own room at the hotel. The interview was sad and solemn.

would suspect the real state of affairs between the Abbé and herself, who was known as his housekeeper. Moreover, Madame Duval had no fortune and Charles Perraud longed to secure her the ease which without her he might have had more readily. Neuralgia, however, not only kept him from preaching, but also led him into many expensive trips in the hope of relief, which at times led to separation, but on his return the pair took up again their sadly sweet home life. On returning from a journey to Italy in 1873, Charles Perraud wrote to M. Hyacinthe Loyson as follows:

July 23rd, 1873.

My Dear Friend:

It is now six months since I have written to you.[1] Many times I wished to do so, but my courage failed. Worn out by misfortune and suffering, we have come to a state of abjection, in which all effort is become, as it were, impossible. The little energy that is left is used up day by day in striving against complete despair and in casting off the floods of bitterness or anger which threaten to sweep away everything before them. So we drop by instinct

[1] The letter here referred to was torn up or lost. The journal of M. Hyacinthe Loyson has the following extract, which he copied on receiving it at Verona, Feb. 3d, 1873:

"I thank you for your prayers: I earnestly ask you to keep them up for me. The sufferings of X and Z (Charles Perraud and his wife — Tr.) are and will be such, no matter what happens, that God would be merciful to them in calling them soon to Himself."

into a gloomy silence and a bitter loneliness, as animals, mortally stricken, fly and seek to die alone in the heart of the forest. Again, in a measure this is correct, for first it is useless to speak of a sorrow which no one could solace, and also because it is better not to inflict pain to no good end upon those who love you.

X. and Z., for reasons that I can not give you, have only to choose between various ways of death; they have mutually decided to attempt once more that up to which a year ago a suffering that almost drove them beyond all self-control was leading them violently and suddenly.

In your last letter to X. you told him: "I refuse to have an opinion about your situation and specially to advise you." In fact, God only knew the unheard of complications of a misfortune which, as I now realize, will end only in death.

Why does God allow such lives, in which a piercing sorrow keeps on growing till it kills? This is a question that daily thousands of miserable human creatures put to themselves. Toward the end of my journey I met often a wretch, half of whose face had been eaten away by a cancer. In one hand he carried a handkerchief with which to hide his ugly sore, and when that hand became too tired he used the other. How many times has the sight of the poor fellow stopped the murmurs in my heart and upon my lips! I looked at him from afar, I prayed for him. Unable, morally and financially, to prolong the sad and lonely journey, I prepared to return hither like a soldier marching to battle, where he fears he will be killed. I said to myself, You also, you will change the hand.

Z (Madame Duval,—Tr.) is again sick and this time with a rheumatic attack, and has not left the bed for three weeks. A few days ago she began to get better, but when the soul is ill the body is healed very slowly. Z., however, tells me that it would be impossible for her to accept and to endure the situation, much less painful, however, among friends who know you.[1]

In fact, beyond the likeness between both loves, so deep and so lasting on the part of both one and the other, everything else is entirely different in the situation of X. and Z and that of their friends.

The sole issue for X. and Z., one they had fondly dreamed of, had been whether at R.(ome) the resignation of X. would be accepted. If such a wonder ever happened, they could have still some years of peace, if not of happiness, in this life. But, alas! the religious world, no more than the political, wishes to hear of useful progress or of peaceful reforms.

Your conference upon "Ultramontanism and the Revolution," [2] the only one that I had the chance to read, pictures only too faithfully that dangerous and deplorable swinging between two extremes, both of which are almost equally disastrous to humanity. Be assured that no distances or separations or hindrances of any sort that may be between us have either shaken or lessened our friendship.

[1] Mons. and Mdme. Hyacinthe Loyson. They did not think the situation so sorrowful.

[2] A lecture delivered June 17th, 1873, before the French residents of Geneva and published as a pamphlet. It was reprinted in the volume "Ni Clericaux ni Atheis" (Paris, Marpon and Flammarion, 1889).

Athwart silence and separation souls may be near one another, as very often they are widely apart amid the surroundings and under the pretexts of intimacy.

We pray God for you. Ask of Him also to preserve us from the misfortune of doubting his goodness or charging to Him the blind and cruel hardness of men. Pray that our agony by day and by night is not lost in His eyes, but that it be added to that storehouse of universal expiation in which also share so many poor creatures better and more innocent than we.

Send me news of yourself and your family. If we must live apart for the days still left us, I hope that we shall forever find ourselves with those whom I lost and whose absence weighs daily more sorrowfully upon my soul.

My respectful regard to Madame.

I embrace you with all my heart.

IV

CATHOLIC REFORM

1873

Very likely, if a child had been born to them, Charles Perraud and Madame Duval would have realized their duty as a married couple to be quite otherwise than to start out and bury themselves, as Charles put it, in some distant place of the world like America or Australia.

But seeing that, with God's permission, their union remained without offspring, they concluded not to go to any extreme. Timid and of refined feelings, Madame Duval wished not to cause scandal. As to the Abbé, his prudence was much less influenced by personal reasons than by the love he had for his brother. Adolphe was then a shining light in the Oratory and a hopeful candidate for the Mitre. Charles, who loved him deeply and knew also his ambitions, wished not to shatter his future.

Now, whatever he might do, it would hurt his brother. If he decided to leave his country, he had been too much in the public view for his departure to be overlooked. Less still could he wave the banner of religious reform, more or less radical, as did M. Hyacinthe Loyson, who

attempted to found at Geneva a "liberal Catholic church." A priest who went to join M. Hyacinthe Loyson having called on the Abbé Perraud, the latter spoke to him so freely as afterwards to regret it. He felt in duty bound to write to his friend under date of September 8th, 1873:

For quite a while and in a friendly way we spoke to this clergyman. Only I forgot to ask him to keep absolute secrecy in my case and I beg you to make known to him as soon as possible this request. He seemed, however, to me intelligent and wise enough to be discreet, and probably because of this I thought not of suggesting to him what, I feel sure, he himself understood and carried out.

My own interests do not bother me so much as those of my brother, whose advance it is not fit that I should spoil at the very moment when everybody believes that he is to become a bishop. Moreover, I gave no personal confidence to Mr. ————, but he can clearly see two things at least: first, my theory of celibacy, *imposed in perpetuity,* and next, my discouragement and the longing I have to be able to end my days in peace and free from worry about all religious and specially clerical quarrels.

I was delighted on learning that Madame L. enjoys good health. I desire for her with all my heart a happy deliverance. Z. (Mad. Duval) thanks you for your remembrances and for the hispitality you offer her as well as X. (Charles Perraud); but it is in truth impossible for them to accept your kind invitation. X. envies you your hap-

piness, but in the strange net work in which on all sides he finds himself, I doubt if he can ever find in this life a little contentment and peace.

Furthermore, it is not well to forget what he said to you from the very start of his relations with you, viz.: in place of feeling, as you do, the desire to be a reforming apostle, he believes that he was entirely deceived in becoming a priest and only wishes to return to the lay life. This disposition of soul makes the difficulties worse, because in that case it would be necessary to have a personal fortune, which he now lacks. I often see these two unfortunates and in the bottom of my heart I believe that God would do them a great favor in calling them as soon as possible to Himself. As to myself, I strive always to overcome my headaches, now so frequent and exhausting, but I progress but very slowly in the examining, correcting, copying, &c., &c., of those manuscripts, which however must be used.[1]

Kindly remember me to Madame L. and believe in my sincere and steady affection.

I enclose a letter of X.

The same letter had Charles Perraud's reflections on the organization which M. Hyacinthe Loyson might give to his church.

My Dear Friend:

Since our talk with the person who has rejoined

[1] Gratry's manuscripts, left by will to Adolphe Perraud. They were published in two volumes, "Souvenirs de ma jeunesse" and "Meditations inedites" (1874). Charles did almost all the work of editing, but for his brother's benefit and under his control.

you, I have given much thought to your enterprise, to the difficulties it entails, and to the means by which to overcome those hindrances. Permit me to tell you very frankly but with a hurried pen, hence without much order, the ideas which have come to me and which seem to me might be of some use to you. I believe you are going to the Congress of Constance (viz: the third of the Old Catholics, opened September 12th, 1873). You will speak there and probably your word will help much in the course affairs will take.

Behold, then, what I regard as indispensable, if you wish to be indeed useful to souls and to the Church. Sound it forth and repeat it many times, that you wish not to found a church, that you aim only to create a resting place, a refuge, a centre of common action for all Catholics, who wish these two things necessary for the advance of the Gospel in this age.

First: To continue Catholics and in so doing to labor for the Church's reform in her head and members, a reform in vain looked for and for so long a while.

Next: To propose and above all to impose only those two points, continue Catholics and labor for the necessary reform within the Church, but to touch neither Theology nor the Sacraments, nor even worship; and, by the way, I have learned with pain that you are already started in that way, in which you should understand that you can not stop. In my view, it would be far better to retrace your steps in this matter and explain why you did so.

In resuming my view and striving to have you grasp it well before I develop it, it seems clear to

me that you should demand, insist upon, and even sketch out the reforms indispensable in the Catholic Church, but that you yourself neither should nor can carry them out; the Church alone has the mission to reform herself.

If the axiom, *in necessariis unitas, in dubiis libertas,* the true safeguard of all interests, was not completely forgotten and even trampled under foot by the present Church government, a congress like that which you hold at Geneva and elsewhere would not be in any way a serious matter, for then men might remain in the Hierarchy, within the law, and both speak freely and demand justice.

It is the misfortune of our times that places souls in this cruel alternative either of remaining within the hierarchy and thus without any means of looking forward to any reform of the Church, or of stepping forth for a time from the Hierarchy and outside the law in order to labor for these reforms which the Church needs.

A comparison, which I consider very correct, will make you still better understand what, in my opinion, should be the attempts at reform in Switzerland, Germany, and elsewhere.

These should be from a moral standpoint what in reality had been those towns and countries of the Middle Ages and the days of the Inquisition that offered hospitality, freedom, and above all, a haven to Catholics, and allowed them to speak freely, safe from denunciations, prisons, torture, and pyres. I regard this comparison as strictly exact, for suppose that to-day a priest, the most irreproachable, the most orthodox, and even the most ultra-montane, had the boldness to demand the reforms needed in the

Church; on the spot he would be denounced, tortured, burned alive, morally speaking — as he would have been actually five or six hundred years ago.

It is my conviction that your work will be fruitful, if limited to this. It will be sterile and even miscarry very quickly if you take up new creeds or innovations, not pressing and not called for by the need of saving souls.

If, then, I were in your place, I would impose upon myself and propose to my followers a systematic abstention from all innovation in doctrinal matters, in the administration of the sacraments, in the liturgy itself. I say not that the Church should not examine later on, for instance, the question of the liturgy in Latin or the vernacular, but I do say that you yourself should not and can not touch these matters without serious drawbacks.

Allow me now to take up some details in order to make my thought clearer:

I understand that you say the Mass or a part of it in French. First: How was this urgent and above all needed either for the salvation of a single soul or for the progress of the Gospel or for the good of the Church?

And next, How can you hinder such of your followers who like it better to say the Mass in Latin? Besides, once you begin to make changes, additions, suppressions, who will fix their limits and where put a stop to them? If you are twenty priests, you will soon have twenty different ways of saying Mass and the faithful at Geneva, any more than in France, will not put up for any length of time with a religion whose worship is left to the caprice of everybody. In fact, kindly notice that

the Gospel merely shows us Jesus Christ consecrating bread and wine and giving Communion to the Apostles.

If you do not impose upon yourselves, one and all, the maintenance for the time being of the forms of worship such as are in use in the Catholic Church, I dare to predict that soon you will have followers who will be content, after the Gospel fashion, to consecrate bread and wine and perhaps even, if the thought struck them, to do so at meal times, in order to imitate more closely Jesus Christ.

Then in my opinion it would be necessary that every one prepare and write out his notions of reform even in regard to matters of detail, but pledge himself to innovate nothing in practice until the forthcoming Council, truly free, which alone will have the mission and authority to regulate it and every other question. How great and adequate a mission for you and the others, to demand, to prepare for, also to conduct these reforms and this next Council, truly free! In my opinion you will get it on the death of Pius IX, but on condition that you stand within the limits I point out and that you will understand that you are nothing more than helpers of the Church, obliged for the time being to serve her beyond her hierarchy and her canon law, and that in place of laboring for separation you work to bring back as soon as possible all Catholics to unity in truth and liberty. *The Truth will make you free.*

On this subject recall two things which now come into my mind: your first cry on leaving the convent. I appeal to a Council truly free. Behold the true aim. Next, the text of St. Augustine which you

gave to M. de Noirlieu, in which the situation of certain extraordinary servants of the Church was so clearly pointed out.[1] Behold the true situation.

Beyond the fact that your innovations would provoke disagreements and divisions among you, except in the impossible chance that you would attempt to *impose* your ideas and even your appreciations upon all your followers, these innovations are immensely wrong in causing much fright to souls and leading to the belief that you are founding a new sect, and of conjuring up the Abbé Chatel[2] and others[3] . . . in a word, of hindering a

[1] "Providence often allows that from troubles stirred up by carnal men pious people are shut out from the Christian community. If they bear up under this affront and injustice patiently in order not to disturb the peace of the Church and in striving not to yield to innovations schismatic or heretical, they will teach men in what sentiments and with what love God should be served. Such persons firmly resolve to re-enter into the Community when the troubles are gone, or if this is not possible for them either during the trial or in order not to stir it up more by their return, they keep the desire to advise those whose return they shun without forming a separate community. They defend even to death and by their testimony maintain the faith which they upheld in the Catholic Church. The Father who seeth every hidden thing crowns this last. Doubtless such persons are few; however, they are not wanting: indeed, they are more numerous than is believed."— De Vera Religione VI. This text is well known. The late Father Tyrrell quoted it with the remark that St. Augustine never retracted it.

[2] Priest of the diocese of Moulins, founder at Paris in 1831, of a petty "Eglise Catholique française." He had himself consecrated a bishop in the Joannite Church by Machault, known as the bailiff John of Jutland, and called himself Primate of the Gauls. (Machault lived in Paris and claimed to be a bailiff of the Knights Templar.— Tr.)

[3] Illegible.

great current of Catholic opinion forming among you. Now this current I think it is possible to create and by its means, after the death of Pius IX., to lead up to the Council truly free, which I would willingly name "The Council of Salvation."

Allow me again to remind you that in the paths of innovations it is a short step to Protestantism and even, as was the case of the Abbé Mouls,[1] to purely natural religion. So also Mons.[2] told me that the Abbé H.[3] regards it as idolatry to expose the Blessed Sacrament in a remonstrance; another will suppress the reserving of it in the Tabernacle; still another will soon believe in no way in the Real Presence.

You will answer me in regard to marriage, for example, that you have already wrought that reform in your own life. First, I believe that if you had vindicated marriage without yourself marrying, you would have made a much greater impression. Besides, it is one of those questions which for certain men, at least, can be looked upon as *urgent,* as touching upon the salvation of the soul, as not being without danger if put off to a remote period. Moreover, you impose not upon your hearers marriage, and I fancy you agree with me that

[1] Canon of Bordeaux, who left the Church after the Vatican Council and lived in retirement at Brussels. He died July 5th, 1878.

[2] The same party that is referred to in the first lines of this letter.

[3] Doubtless Abbé Hurtault, priest of the diocese of Tours, honorary canon, one time secretary of Archbishop Guibert, afterward Cardinal, Archbishop of Paris, and Curé of Ballan, who joined M. Hyacinthe Loyson at Geneva, May 31st, 1873.

you believe that you will have gained your point in regard to clerical celibacy only when you have won its reform in a Council truly free, but because it will stand for the entire Church, enjoying the authority which neither you nor your followers — since you are only individuals — can enjoy.[1]

If you limit your efforts to preparing the reforms and providing shelter, food, care, chance of an honorable holy life, the possibility of marriage even to those priests who would wish to marry and prepare for it with you, there would follow another great advantage; that is, besides your publicly known adherents, you would win, by little and little, but quickly and surely, a number of secret followers, and it will be the multitudes of these latter who will, by fashioning the opinion of the day, bring about the reforms and the free Council, feasible after the death of Pius IX.

I am led to think that if in your speeches, perhaps in a manifesto, better still in the decisions of your congresses, you would appeal to the clergy of the entire world in the way I point out to you, you

[1] This passage of the Abbé Perraud's letter alludes to a rumor that M. Hyacinthe Loyson would impose marriage on the priests who joined him. This was a mistake, although M. Loyson advised it to some who, thinking the time was not ripe for the reform of clerical celibacy, led a double life. The disgust of M. Loyson in regard to such priests, for a large part *unworthy,* together with the anti-liberal policy of the Geneva Council of State, led him soon to make up his mind to resign his office as Curé of Geneva (Aug. 4th, 1874). (He held this office by the appointment of the City and Canton of Geneva, which shortly before had expelled Mgr., afterwards Cardinal, Mermillod, bishop of Geneva.— Tr.)

would see drawn around you by *threads* hidden but solid, thousands not only of disciples but co-workers who are looking to you up to now, but who, however, are indispensable in order to make your effort fruitful and bring it to success.

Many, in fact, who for divers reasons can not be openly and above-board with you would be with you in heart and soul from the day when they saw clearly that they ran no risk of being drawn by you into heresy or schism and could in all conscience and *in all orthodoxy* work with you in preparing reforms for the coming Council.

You would promise to all absolute secrecy as to their names and persons, and then I feel that there would flow to you a number of adhesions, encouragements, ideas, helps of all sorts, writings that you would be asked to publish by those unable to do so themselves, etc. Then you might have at Geneva a large and attractive newspaper, especially when your co-workers would find in it a means of support.

Moreover, I believe that you would win again to Catholicism many priests who had become protestant pastors because they had not then this open door and whose return *by means of yourself* would by no means be a trifling success. You would stir up also many needed labors; for example, the verification and proof of so many important facts, mentioned in Janus,[1] personal inquiries on the state of the clergy in regard to celibacy in the different nations of the world, especially in South America,

[1] Doellinger's book, The Pope and the Council at first signed Janus, translated by A. Giraud-Teulon (fils) Paris, 1869, in 12mo. A new and better edition of this work was

on the state of the Faith, etc., in the United Greek Church, etc., etc.

Space is lacking and I add only a word more, leaving developments to another time. In your place, I would abstain from even handling the question of infallibility; it is an ink-well whence every one draws as he pleases, and it is indeed useless to bother oneself over it. The future free Council will decree the way of accepting this point and I have no uneasiness about its decision.

All this is very confused, very incomplete, but there are, I think, true ideas, and I ask of God that they turn to your good and to that of the souls you love, as well as to that of the Gospel and the Church, whose minister you wish to continue.

M. Hyacinthe Loyson attended, as Charles Perraud had foreseen, the Congress of Old Catholics at Constance. Not only did he take no part in it, but he left in the middle of a session as a sort of protest against a speech which was being delivered.[1]

published in 1904 by the same translator under the title *La Papauté, ses origines au moyen-âge, son influence jusqu'en 1870.* (Paris, Alcan, in 8mo.)

[1] The following note is from the journal of M. Hyacinthe Loyson:

Sunday, September 14th, 1873. I return from this session, which I was obliged to leave boldly because of the injustice and injuries directed against France by that rude German deputy (M. Volk, of Augsburg). I left with M. de Pressensé, who sat near me and shared my indignation. If the real trouble was, as M. Volk said, the dispute between the Germans and the Welsh, I would not be here, for I am *Welsh,* and wish to remain one, but while defending my people, I favor not the wars of race.

A little later, Charles Perraud, writing to his friend apropos of his child's birth, brought up again the ideas which he had already spun out regarding the reform of the Church.

It was with lively pleasure that I learned that you left the meeting of the Congress at Constance when that unlucky German spoke improperly of our country.

The little I have been able to learn of that Congress confirms me in the thought expressed in my last letter to you, viz.: that there is no need of striving to establish new churches, but to reform the Church.

To this you will answer probably that collective action is very hard where there is no positive constitution. I admit that I believe quite the opposite if it be well understood that the movement is confined to something essentially provisional and only to tide over the time of an extraordinary crisis and to prepare urgent reforms.[1]

This brutal *nationalism* is pagan; that fellow was full of this thought. (*Welche,* or, as Littre who has it, *Velche* says it is a word given by Germans to Frenchmen and Italians — the German form of the Latin *Gallas, Gaulois,* with the suffix *sch, sk.* Compare *Wales.*— Tr.) The Russian archgeneral Vasilieff, who was near me, said to me at the opening of that speech, "It is a disgrace and profanation of the movement."

[1] Letter of Sept. 28th, 1873.

V

THE GREAT DEPRESSION

1874-1879

The nomination of Adolphe Perraud at the beginning of 1874 to the bishopric of Autun brought great joy and comfort to Charles.[1] The latter thought that, come what might to himself, he could not at least any longer injure his well beloved brother. But far from beginning a more tranquil life, he entered upon a very darkened period.

Stomach troubles were added to his head troubles. Work was impossible for him. He gave up all reading and even correspondence. For some years his sole help was the chase, of which he was always very fond, now increased because of his health. He visited all his friends in the country, among whom he could enjoy "the freedom of a gun." But in preaching no longer he deprived himself of his resources, and money troubles following his sickness, together with the anxieties of the false home, he fell into a very serious depression. "Again I should tell you," he wrote to M. Hyacinthe Loyson, in the letter of August 3rd, 1874, from which the above is quoted, "that

[1] On the Episcopate of Adolphe Perraud, see a study which I made of it in "Evèques et dioceses," First Series.

if I were a trifle richer, I would prefer, above all else, an entire *withdrawal* from the world, so worn out, physically and mentally, am I."

In 1876 M. Loyson sent to Charles Perraud the sermons which he had just delivered and a book of the Abbé Chavard upon clerical celibacy.[1] From the long letter in which Perraud thanked his friend of Geneva, the following extracts reveal to us his frame of mind and his state of health at that time:

PARIS, July 20, 1876,

MY DEAR FRIEND:

I would have ere this acknowledged the arrival of the two volumes which you sent me, and especially to thank you for the promptness with which you saw that they were forwarded; but I desired to know your two speeches and to be able to speak of them to you. Unfortunately also, all these days my habitual headaches are worse and have rendered me unfit to read. At last, after I know not how many attempts, I made this reading and I begin by telling

[1] "Le Célibat des prêtres et ses consequences," by the Abbé F. Chavard, Curé of Geneva (Geneve, Benoit, 1874, 12mo. xviii. 805 p.) The work is preceded by a letter of M. Hyacinthe Loyson. He wrote to the author. "I congratulate you especially that throughout your study you kept within the lines of Catholic orthodoxy. You attack abuses but you respect the Church. You wish for a reform but you would have it Catholic. You know that, if the discipline changes, the dogma is unchangeable." Later, Chavard brought out another work on the same subject, *Le Celibat, le prêtre, et la femme.* (Paris, Grassart, 8vo., 1894).

you that, taking them all in all, these addresses give me the liveliest and most serious satisfaction.

I already in substance knew that you had from the start kept yourself and your cause apart from the agitations more shameful than those of ultramontanism. Finally I read with pleasure those energetic and eloquent protests which gain for you the right and authority necessary for the cause of truth. To-day more than at the time I wrote you my last letter, I realize clearly that, as much as it is a dream to strive to found churches and even permanent associations outside of the Catholic hierarchy, it is just as useful to have independent voices crying out for the needed reforms and to maintain the indispensable "liberty in doubtful matters."

The violent and indeed unheard of oppression which weighs down more and more upon those still accepting the hierarchy justifies and even necessitates the *temporary* and extraordinary mission of such men who only withdraw from the hierarchy in order not to be wiped out by it.

With all the reserve demanded by humblemindedness and common sense, it strikes me that if I were in your place I would speak of myself and my mission as "the voice of one crying in the desert, Prepare ye the way of the Lord." Then, no matter that you be alone, provided, however, that you strive more and more to be the organ of souls *innumerable,* who while still of the orthodox, ultramontane Catholic church think with you and like you on a great many points. As I told you about two years ago, if I am not mistaken, the most important part, although, to be frank, the

most delicate of your mission would lie in keeping up relations, as far as possible, with the souls of whom I have just now spoken. This is why I insisted and still insist with all my strength that you introduce no other changes than those which are *in conscience indespensable.* Thus Roman Catholics will find between themselves and yourself the slightest possible differences and divergencies. It is because of this standpoint, if you remember, that I regretted to see you say Mass in French rather than in Latin. These changes in detail are enough to baffle the faithful and, in fact, no other result, good or bad, may be looked for.

How much I regretted that I could not enjoy your company longer. My poor head, which refuses to allow me to read and write, permits me still to understand and reason.[1]

As to the book of the Abbé Ch.(avard), it was enough for me to run over it and even that fatigued me a great deal. It struck me as interesting, serious, useful. If I had known it sooner, I would have escaped historical researches which, this winter, harmed me much. But this book is unknown and it ought to be made known. If I were rich, I would send a copy of it to all the priests who I might hope would not burn it before reading it. I am inclined to think that no one at Paris knows of the existence of this book, no more than I did myself. This is very regrettable. It strikes me also that your works are seen only in shop windows. I understand very well the difficulty of sell-

[1] Here Charles Perraud suggests to M. Loyson a few corrections of different passages in his speech.

ing such books. Catholic book stores neither will nor can sell them, and, in fact, I believe that the Protestant do not bother about them. In my opinion, it would be better to make them accessible to Catholics and leave them with book dealers who have no religious bias.

My respectful regards to Madame.

I embrace you with all my heart.

CH.

Two months later, Charles Perraud sent again to his trusted friend at Geneva the following lines:

How shall I speak to you, my dear friend, I who am more broken at heart than in head? Yes, I have prayed for you and I will still pray, but I ask you again and very earnestly to pray for me. Alas! the growing unfitness for intellectual work to which my continual headaches bring me is heart-rending from every point of view, for I know not for a fact how I will win in the near future our daily bread. My situation is always, and in spite of myself, a tangle. I begin to think also that my one true liberator will be death. Indeed, we are born too soon or too late, and I try to console myself in hoping that in a near future the church of Jesus Christ will no longer reduce to despair and mortal agony souls of good will, upright consciences, and devout hearts, such as it seems to me I have known. . . .

Here am I in a village where everything is noticed, and because of my brother I must subject myself to precautions which amount to very little

as far as I myself am concerned. May God put to my credit so many superhuman sacrifices that I have always made for this brother, tenderly loved, but above all since we — the one and the other — are now all one family.

During my stay with him and without the distraction of hunting, by means of which I come to forget myself, I did wrong here in fatiguing my head in his library. I read Le Courayer's preface to the translation of the "History of the Council of Trent," by Paolo Sarpi. I cannot point out to you how much I was struck by the resemblance of Le Courayer's ideas and ours, and at once I determined to let you know of this remarkable work in case you knew it not. At the end of the volume is a long condemnation of Le Courayer by an Archbishop of Toulouse, but my poor head did not allow me to read it and verify whether the reproaches against him are deserved. I believe that you will easily find it in the public libraries of Geneva. I hope ever that God will soon give us a chance of seeing you once more and of talking thoroughly over matters, as it is impossible for me to do so, above all, by letter.

Always yours from the depth of my heart, and my respectful regards also to Madame.

CHARLES

A thing which, as I have already heretofore said, that makes X. a hundred times unhappier than you. is that he is completely deceived and that, putting aside all questions of liberation and so on, he should have been a layman and not a priest. Every day this becomes clearer to me.[1]

[1] Letter dated Villequiers (Cher), September 5th, 1876.

In 1877 Père Hyacinthe wrote vaguely enough to Charles Perraud that a priest who had joined the Reformed Catholic movement at Geneva and had married had returned to the obedience of Rome and that his situation had been regularized by Mgr. Mermillod, who acted as intermediary.

Such a very recent case gave some hopes to Charles Perraud and Madame Duval and they sought to te get some details " on the subject of this exceptional marriage." [1] Moreover, they seemed at this time so much set upon legalizing their union that Charles Perraud wished to know also " in every case what are the requirements of Swiss Civil law in regard to marriage." [2]

Charles Perraud then begged his brother to cite at Rome the case in which Mgr. Mermillod interested himself, in order to obtain his own secularizing. It was not the first time that he asked the bishop of Autun to do him this service.

Adolphe learned the irregular situation of his brother a little after he became a bishop. When he first knew of it, he broke off all relations with him in the hope of leading him to break off with Madame Duval. Seeing that Charles preferred always the other love to that of fraternal, he took up again his relations with him and used again all his influence to keep him in

[1] Letter of Charles Perraud to M. Hyacinthe Loyson, July 10th, 1877.

[2] Both in French Law and Canon Law the marriage of Charles Perraud and Madame Duval was invalid and illegal.— Tr.

the Church. One day Charles, unable to stand it longer, said to him: "I am going to America and no one will hear me spoken of again." Adolphe answered: "Then I leave my episcopal throne and will go and bury myself among the Trappists and no one will hear me spoken of again."

Many times the bishop assured his brother that he had asked of Rome his secularization.[1] He surely did so, since he said he did, but we may doubt if his requests were strong, and especially if he named the priest on whose behalf he sought the favor. Did he make new attempts in 1877? One fact alone is certain, granting that he had: they were no more successful than the former. Charles Perraud determined to exercise as little as possible his priestly functions. The political attitude which the Church adopted after May sixteenth caused him extreme displeasure, and he wished not to take part in electoral affairs.[2]

[1] Testimony of M. Hyacinthe Loyson.

[2] In his letter of July 10th, above quoted (Note 1, p. 74, book), the Abbé Perraud wrote: "Useless to speak to you of politics, our saviors become more and more ridiculous and at times odious. In particular, have you read a passage of the *Bulletin des Communes* relative to the review of July 1st? It strikes me that means more shocking were never used even under the Empire." Nov. 8th, 1877, he wrote from Nevers to M. Frederick Passy: "My intention is to put off as long as possible my return to Paris and probably I will not get there before the month of January. The almost steady headaches with

Somewhat later he asked M. Hyacinthe Loyson to name for him a confessor who could understand his state. He was in want of a confidant to whom he might pour out his heart every time he felt the need of it. M. Hyacinthe Loyson turned him over to the Abbé Cédoz, an old Dominican, chaplain of the English Augustinesses at Neuilly-sur-Seine.

While without any illusion about the origins of Christianity and without hope of its future, the Abbé Cédoz was among those priests absolutely decided to stay in the Church.[1] He influenced

which I am afflicted make me prefer the sojourn in and the liberty of the fields to the life of Paris; and besides, I tell you that it would be extremely painful to me amidst these political complications to be enrolled, were it only by my dress, in a party and a struggle which I have not ceased to curse from the very first. In the country, at least, for Nevers is rather my headquarters than my regular home, every one knows that I always was and am a republican." This letter, as is apparent, reëchoes the disputes which attended the election of October 14th, when the voters by a great majority elected the candidates of the democratic party.

(May 16th, 1877, was the turning point in Macmahon's regime. It saw the real birth of the Third Republic.—Tr.)

[1] For the Abbé Cédoz see "La Crise du Clergé," 2nd ed. p. 57. At the beginning of 1878, M. Hyacinthe Loyson returned to live in Paris. From that time letters from his friend are, of course, but few. But the journal of M. Loyson shows that they often saw each other. As a sample I give these notes of their friendship.

Feb. 1, 1878. The poor dear Abbé Ch. Perraud, victim of a false system, profoundly discouraged. Read a touching letter from his brother, the bishop of Autun.

June 12th. Emilie (Madame Loyson) visited the Expo-

very much his new penitent. Directed in this fashion and as his advice agreed with the wishes that Madame Duval expressed without ceasing to Charles Perraud, the latter litle by little grew to accustom himself to the notion of carrying his yoke until death.

sition with X. and Z. Dear Father Perraud dined with us.

June 19th. Ch. Perraud at two meals.

June 23rd. Ch. Perraud dined with us this evening. He leaves to-morrow for La Vendée, where he will pass some months. The goodness of this soul is as profound as his sorrow. *Mentem mortalia tangunt.*

July 15th, 1881. This morning had the visit, sweet and pleasant, of the excellent Charles Perraud. . . . He said to me: "Probably if you were in my place, you would have done as I did, as I would have done as you did if I had been in your place." He rightly gives the good outcome of my marriage to the force of my noble companion's character, and to the fact that she is a stranger. X. and Z. are not in the same circumstances.

Oct. 28th. Pleasant visit of Charles Perraud, who leaves for Rome with his brother, the bishop of Autun. Madame Duval, *his wife before God,* lives with him in his new apartment, Avenue de Breteuil, *with the bishop's consent.* Thus in this detestable system everything is double-dealing and false, even among the most strict and the best.

VI

IN THE PULPIT

1880–1887

As long as Charles Perraud remained in the church, having only "an aptitude for the word," [1] he was obliged to gain his support by preaching and not in the usual parochial ministry, in which he would have to perform duties unsuitable to his tastes. At the end of 1878 he resolved to remount the pulpit, but it was only in 1880 that he had recovered the strength, physical as well as moral, to take up this new departure. The bishop of Autun, with whom he was then staying, wished that he would give his first sermon dressed as an honorary Canon of his cathedral. He conferred upon him this dignity.[2] Up to that time Charles had refused

[1] December 16th, 1878, Charles Perraud wrote from Saint Paul-en-Paredz (Vendée) to M. Hyacinthe Loyson, where he was on vacation: "X. wrote me lately that in spite of every sort of hindrance which made the task almost impossible, he would soon be forced to reappear in public, having only a little aptitude for the word and understanding that every other means of gaining a livelihood was entirely a dream. For myself I know his situation in all its aspects, and I think it will be almost a miracle if X. succeeds in carrying out this scheme."

[2] *Semaine réligieuse* of Autun, August 14th and 21st, 1880, and Largent in the Life already quoted, p. 43, who gives the analysis of this first sermon.

it, alleging that his health would not permit him to work; but, in fact, because intending to leave the clergy, he wanted no distinction, no appointment, in order to get away the more readily.

In 1881 he preached the Lenten sermons at Saint Clotilde, a little later the retreat in preparation for the first Communion, and at the end of the year he began popular conferences in the Church of Saint Ambrose in the heart of the workingmen's quarter. The Abbé Perraud believed that along with the conferences at Nôtre Dame, chiefly addressed to the youth of the schools and people of leisure, there was a place for a similar series to be delivered to the working people. At other times he had preached with success at La Rochelle and Rheims sermons specially addressed to men. He succeeded with the same in Paris. During six years he saw grouped around his pulpit a large audience. Later he gave his conferences in the more aristocratic churches, St. Roch, St. Clotilde, The Madeleine.[1]

If Charles Perraud put aside celibacy, he remained none the less a sincere Catholic. He never wished to know how far historical criticism had undermined the thesis of a Christian revelation. To the Abbé de Meissas, who once attempted to bring it home to him, he answered, "Never could I believe that the faith in which

[1] Lenten Stations at the Madeleine (1882 and 1888), at La Trinité (1885), at Saint-Roch. (1885 and 1887), Saint Clotilde (1886 and 1889).

the Abbé Perreyve died was wrong." [1] He believed in the divinity of Jesus Christ, in the divine institution of the Church, in the Primacy of the Pope. He accepted the dogma of Papal Infallibility, in explaining it thus: As the Vatican Council, he held, gave no sufficient explanation of the conditions on which a decision should be declared irreformable, while another Council would have given the necessary details, we remain as free as beforehand.

He thought the Papacy was much disposed to exaggerate its own prerogatives and had abused them a good deal, but he questioned not the lawfulness of its power. Everything in history which troubled his so easy-going mind he passed by in silence, or managed to give it a twist. It was in substance a liberal catholicism that he preached and wished to make acceptable to the citizen of to-day. These concessions to contemporary ideals angered the reactionaries. His best friends gave up the thought of justifying them.[2]

It is none the less true that they won for him

[1] "The Crise du Clergé," 2nd edition, p. 220.

[2] Père Largent admits (pp. 57, 58), "that at times Charles Perraud seemed to make extreme concessions." Upon "a grave and delicate matter the coercitive power of the Church (Inquisition — Tr.) the orator did not express himself in a manner sufficiently exact and full." Apropos of the possibility of a perfect good faith founded on invincible ignorance and the invincible blindness of the Atheist and Materialist, the Abbé Perraud despised, according to Largent, the teaching of Father Perrone, S. J.

large and loyal audiences. To understand what plays of apologetic strength he wrought, it suffices to read his conferences upon Christianity and individual goodness. This priest, whose whole life was poisoned by the law of clerical celibacy, pictures the moral and the discipline of this Church as the best guaranty of goodness.

If a man knew how to direct his intelligence to think, his heart to love, his virtue to gain another soul; if he knew how to say: "No matter the torrent of criminal pleasures which pass by me, they will not drag me into their flow. What I need is a soul, a soul in which I can plunge my own for ever and aye, a heart which beats in unison with mine, a conscience in which I can see myself and see God eternally as I see myself and see God in my own conscience." If a man could say this, the legend of woman's creation would be repeated for him, God would bring to him the exquisite creature who rose before the first man, and in spite of the inevitable sorrows of life he would after a fashion reënter the paradise of happiness.

O you who are on the step of violating your honor, remember your soul and the soul that you must receive from God. Both are immortal, both are of priceless worth, both enjoy a richness that eternity will not exhaust. They can therefore find the one in the other, a goodness unending. Remember also those who will be one day the joy, the honor, the incomparable treasure of your hearth. Is there anything in this world more beautiful than to see souls multiplying around one? Contemplate be-

forehand those little hands which are held up to you, those looks which go out to you in love, that cry of infant weakness which utters: My father! which has need of your care and your labor. Hard it is to win by the sweat of the brow the daily bread of a whole family. You know it better than I, gentlemen. But at even, when the little ones smile and embrace you, you soon forget your weariness. Permit still those souls, all fresh, to beat against your heart and you will feel that God is within you.

Will you now say that religion, whose ministers we are, contradicts the heart and its love; that our piety is without compassion; that lost in dry abstractions, we have not heated words enough to flay the joys of earth and discourage men of good will here below? The Apostle Saint Paul preached not such hardness of heart! "Love your wives," said he to men, "as Christ loved the Church," and he shows how Christ loved this universal society of the just, for he did everything to teach them, to spiritualize them, to bless them, and he spared not even his own blood in order to redeem them from evil. Behold the love which St. Paul counsels and commands to men. He could not go further, for Christ, who hath loved us even unto death, took care to declare: "Greater love than this no man hath than to lay dawn his life for those he loves." [1]

[1] "Conferences de Saint Ambroise," 1881, pp. 144–147. Père Largent explains those pages thus: "If, obedient to God's appeal, he had renounced for himself the joys, severe though sweet, of the domestic hearth, he understood them, he guessed at their wholesome charm. He developed the married and family life, as he had seen it in his dreams, a delightful picture. (supra, p. 64.)

And after having at length and with warmth thus described the family, Perraud regained his self-possession. To give the official teaching of the Church or to take from his hearers the too human thoughts of a good husband and a good father, he went on to "speak of another ideal reserved to those privileged souls of whom Jesus Christ said: Let him understand who can." [1]

Saint Paul, whose beautiful doctrine on Christian marriage you have just heard, placed so high the sorrowful joys of sacrifice that he feared not to say, "I would that you were like myself; but each one has his own gift according as he received it from God." [2]

There then is the mystery of that superhuman love, of that supernatural enthusiasm, which Lacordaire describes in a page — as it were, the reflection of his own life:

"Yes, the priesthood is an immolation of the individual added to that of God, and he is called to it who feels in his heart the value and beauty of souls. Whoever here below recognizes under the sad veil which presses and hides us the immortal image of God; whoever discerns it, in spite of sin, ruin and desolation, such and so dear an object of love that he would die for it, such an one carries a grand treasure in a fragile vessel. He is of the blood which pours itself out to save; he understands in some measure, higher than aught else, that sweet

[1] Matt. xix. 12.
[2] I Cor. vii. 7.

and penetrating word, 'Thou art a Priest forever.'" [1]

No, it is not Christianity, it is materialism which closes the door to goodness. On the contrary, Christianity opens it to all, it dispenses largely, universally, in the broadest meaning of that great word, that heavenly blessing which God wishes us to have, a glimpse here below in order to put into our hearts a more ardent longing for eternal joys.

In his conferences the Abbé Perraud brushed aside every thought of the Church's reform. He fancied he was opening the way to it indirectly. To accept all progress, silence upon everything out of date, symbolical explanation of the Bible, disavowal of the Inquisition, of the ancient regime, of the teachings of the Syllabus: such were the means that he looked upon as destined to reconcile the Church and modern society. He expected so much from those means because they were the only ones he could employ and because his friend, M. Hyacinthe Loyson, had stranded in his announced attempt at reform. As to the latter, in spite of Charles Perraud's views, he continued to believe that if all who had desired reform had followed himself, the reform would have come.

February 1, 1883, he wrote thus on the matter to the preacher at St. Ambrose:

You know that I have always the best of wishes

[1] Panegyric of Blessed Fourier.

for you and that I desire, without much hope, however, to see you, along with your friends, bring about a genuine reform in the bosom of the Roman Church. The duty of such as think as I do would be to follow me courageously upon the dogmatic ground of a protest against Papal Infallibility, which is a potent error or an absurdity, and upon the moral ground of freedom of priests to marry, which either in itself or in its results is one of the most urgent reforms pressing upon the Church and upon conscience. In place of this, they buried themselves in silence and in compromises as cheap as they are useless and have forsaken me in the superhuman strife in which God alone supported me. May God forgive them the harm they did to me and to his cause without knowing it. As to myself I will love them none the less.

The authority usurped in the Church and before her the weak-neckedness of Catholic consciences, *Liberty* corrupted in the State and the shuffling of fear and of self-interest on the one hand with fanaticism on the other: behold the two evils, opposed and yet alike, under which we suffer and die as Catholics and as Frenchmen. Truth and justice could alone save us. But neither in the political order, any more than in the religious did we find truth and justice, whose soldiers, aye, if needful, martyrs, we have tried to be.

If the success of Charles Perraud in the pulpit released him from worry over money in bringing the means of living to his hearth, they failed not to make for him new difficulties. Lady admirers regarded it is an honor and mark of esteem to

look after his welfare and busy themselves about his home. When calling to visit him they saw themselves forestalled. They gossiped among themselves as to who that stranger was who at times opened the door. For a housekeeper she seemed unusually anxious about her master. Whenever he gave a conference, she came always with him in a closed cab and immediately afterwards they returned together therein. A jealous woman determined to find out the truth. She called on an intimate friend of Charles Perraud, the Abbé Bernard, Curé of Saint James du Haut-Pas, who liked not Madame Duval and in naming her somewhat raised the veil over the mystery. The name once known, her past was easily traced. It amounted to nothing. From that time on Charles Perraud had to put up with scenes of jealousy on the part of some women and might well fear exposure. He wished not, however, to change his way of life and preferred to await developments. He was well enough esteemed as to be denounced neither to the diocesan authority nor to public opinion. His secret was not noised about.[1]

[1] This last sentence proves that Charles Perraud's marriage was an open secret.— Tr.

VII

HIS WIFE'S DEATH

1887

During the month of February, 1886, Madame Duval had a severe attack of pleurisy. The following February she had a relapse so serious that she was unable to throw it off afterwards. On August 19th, M. Hyacinthe Loyson wrote the following letter to Charles Perraud, who was hesitating between his priestly duties and the care he owed his wife.

In spite of clerical prejudices as well as worldly prejudices, you have devoted your life to a great and pure love. Both of you might have found in this act of heroic courage a more abundant blessing of God, a fuller approval of your conscience, a peace and a joy of soul which you have but imperfectly tasted.

God none the less accepts your love and takes into account the power of the worldly chains that you have not been able to cast off. I implore Him with all my soul to preserve her to you, who is in truth your wife in His sight, and to give you the means to do for her everything that should be done in such decisive circumstances. Your labors in Paris can be postponed till later, the trip to Pau can not. Be my spokesman with the dear invalid, and believe always, my dear friend in my full, cordial and religious devotedness. *In Christo Jesu et in Ecclesia Christiana Catholica.*

They went to Pau, where Madame Duval exhausted her remaining strength. Charles gave her every care and in return she offered him the tenderest love. She behaved toward him as towards a priest. To the very end she addressed him as Monsieur l'Abbé, and also as "You." [1] She looked upon herself as a priest's wife and believed herself bound to be devout. Daily she said the rosary. And when she realized her approaching end, she determined to receive weekly communion, which Charles Perraud gave to her. One day he said to her, "We have followed our consciences, but perhaps we were wrong. Do you wish to confess to another priest?" "No," she answered, sweetly and firmly, "we did well and never will I give my confidence to any other priest than yourself." Her agony was long, calm and full of tenderness for the husband she was leaving, full of devotion for God before whom she was about to stand. When Charles saw that her hours were about numbered, he read the litanies for a good death from the Diurnal of the Marchioness of Andelarre.[2]

[1] In French life, ordinarily, husband and wife, brother and sister, two lovers, address each other in the singular, "Thou." The upper classes, however, use in public the plural, "You."— Tr.

[2] "Heures choisies ou Recueil de prières pour tous les besoins de la vie," by Claudia, Agathe Jacquot-Rouhier, Marchioness of Andelarre. This book was frequently printed at Dijon and Limoges. The first edition appeared in 1816. The translation here used is found in many American Prayer Books.— Tr.

LITANY FOR A GOOD DEATH

O Lord Jesus, God of goodness and Father of mercies, I draw nigh to Thee with a contrite and humble heart; to Thee I recommend the last hour of my life and that judgment which awaits me afterwards.

When my hands, cold and trembling, shall no longer be able to clasp the crucifix, and, against my will, shall let it fall on my bed of suffering, Merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When my eyes, dim and troubled at the approach of death, shall fix themselves on Thee, my last and only support, Merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When my lips, pale and trembling, shall pronounce for the last time Thine adorable name, Merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When my cheeks, pale and livid, shall inspire the beholders with pity and dismay, Merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When my hair, bathed in the sweat of death and stiffening on my head, shall forbode mine approaching end, Merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When my ears, soon to be forever shut to the discourse of men, shall be open to that irrevocable decree which is to fix my doom for eternity, Merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When my feet, benumbed with death, shall admonish me that my mortal course is drawing to an end, Merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When my imagination, agitated by dreadful spectres, shall be sunk in an abyss of anguish; when my soul, affrighted with the sight of my iniquities and the terrors of Thy judgments, shall have to fight against the angel of darkness, who will endeavor to conceal Thy mercies from mine eyes and plunge me into despair, Merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When my poor heart, oppressed with suffering and exhausted by its continual struggles with the enemies of its salvation, shall feel the pangs of death, Merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When my parents and friends, surrounding my bed, shall be moved with compassion for me and invoke Thy clemency in my behalf, Merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When I shall have lost the use of my senses, when the world shall have vanished from my sight, when mine agonizing soul shall feel the pangs of death, Merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When my last sighs shall force my soul from my body, accept them as sighs of a loving impatience to come to thee, Merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When the last tear, the forerunner of my dissolution, shall drop from mine eyes, receive it as a sacrifice of expiation for my sins; grant that I may expire the victim of penance; and then, in that dreadful moment, Merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When my soul, trembling on my lips, shall bid

farewell to the world and leave my body lifeless, pale and cold, receive this separation as a homage which I willingly pay to Thy divine majesty, and in that last moment of my mortal life, Merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When at length my soul, admitted to Thy presence, shall first behold the splendor of Thy Majesty, reject it not, but receive it into Thy bosom, where I may forever sing Thy praises; and in that moment when eternity shall begin for me, Merciful Jesus, have mercy on me.

When Madame Duval had breathed forth her last sigh, the Abbé closed her eyes. He brought the body to Paris to be buried in the tomb which she had prepared and to which she had transferred the corpse of her dearly beloved child.[1]

[1] Madame Duval died Monday, Dec. 19th, 1887. M. Loyson's journal has notes of two letters received from his friend during his sad days at Pau:

November 22nd. Heart-breaking letter from the Abbé Charles Perraud (Pau, 18, rue Henri IV.), who sees his companion, Mme. Duval, dying amid frightful pains but in sublime resignation.

December 23rd. "My dear holy martyr went to heaven Monday evening at 11.30." Letter of the Abbé Charles Perraud.

The details of Madame Perraud's death were told by Charles Perraud to M. and Mme. Hyacinthe Loyson while on a visit to them. M. Loyson has thus recorded it in his journal:

March 6th, 1888. Nice visit from the Abbé Perraud. He is a great soul, a very holy soul of the New Church

although in the net of the Old Church. In tears he narrated to us the long and noble agony of his companion, his wife before God, Mme. Duval. It was he himself who heard her confession, gave her weekly communion, recited along with her the thrilling litanies for a good death out of the book of Devotions of the Marchioness d'Andelarre, closed her eyes and brought back her corpse to Paris. He hopes to rejoin her soon, but wishes himself to become holier before dying.

Mme. Duval was buried Dec. 24th, 1887, in Montparnasse Cemetery. Her grave is No. 12 East, 9th Division, 9th row North. The grave stone carries the following simple inscription:

Raymond Duval,
Concession a perpetuité
No. 816.
1875.

(Raymond was her family name: Rosalie Eugenie Raymond.— Tr.)

VIII

ALONE

1888–1892

Charles Perraud's life was broken. He had but one wish,— to rejoin her whom he had lost, and to make good use of the time to be given him by God "in order to become holier." To Madame Loyson, who in the summer of 1888, in order to soften his grief, invited him to go with her husband and herself to the waters at Mont-Doré, he answered sorrowfully:

AUTUN, July 23rd, 1888.

DEAR MADAM:

Your loving kindness touched me; as also your sympathy, which can never be overdone. If I dared, I would add that I thank God for the bitterness of my sorrow and would ask of Him to increase rather than lessen it, even to my last breath.

Is it not a grace, foreordained perhaps for my salvation, to feel myself more dead than alive while retaining, however, enough strength, physical and moral, to attempt something while Providence will leave me in this sad world. Oh, not that I would not desire to be again at Mont-Doré: there I would once more find too many heartbreaking recollections. But both of you be assured that my thoughts and my prayers are with you. I hope our friend will take the treatment rather as a precaution than from

any need. You will send me news of him, will you not, while ever asking him to pray much for me? Here I will spend nearly all my vacation. Courage is wanting to lead me, as of old, into circles where I should meet pleasure and fun.

Here at least I enjoy comparative solitude and a kind of monastic life which accords better with the longings and needs of a broken heart.

Believe always, dear Madame, in my respectful and sincere affection. CHARLES PERRAUD

From this time on the Abbé Perraud's way of preaching underwent a noteworthy change. Up to now he had willingly given his efforts to conferences; hereafter he devoted himself less to persuading his hearers to lead a Christian life than to console them, or rather console himself along with them in life's sorrows. Next to having been a good lecturer, he excelled in homily. He loved to explain, in a sentimental way, the Gospel or to comment upon a Gospel parable or miracle. The unction with which he spoke won hearts. He composed also a small, touching work, "Meditations on the Seven Words of Our Lord Jesus Christ upon the Cross," which was brought out in 1890.[1]

He gave it this dedication:

TO THE MEMORY OF
THE DEAR SOULS
WHO WAIT WITH ME BEFORE GOD.

[1] Paris: Librairie Téqui, and the 8th in 1907, by the same house.

This book is his masterpiece, the testament of an entire life of desolation. In July, 1873, Charles Perraud wrote, "Why does God allow lives where a dreadful sorrow keeps on daily growing, until the day comes when it kills?"[1] How often, during so many years, did not this sad question take hold of him who wrote the following meditation:

Oh, dreadful pain to ever ask why, and never receive an answer! At least when the babe repeats this word coming constantly to his lips, he says it sweetly because the loving answers of father or mother give him the joy of finding something new and of surprise thereat. Now I, who am but a child and without any one in whom I can confide; I turn over and over again in my mind those unsolvable problems, and when I force myself to read, study, compare, I see no more clearly than before; and even in my dreams or my sleep. which wearies me, I am chased by the eternal Why.

Oh, yes, why is there so much useless, undeserved suffering upon earth? Why do some die of hunger, while others rejoice in the fulness of wealth and the splendor of luxury? Why are there blind-born, deaf-mutes, lepers, paralytics? Why are innocent souls tortured throughout life with hideous wounds? Why mothers who kill their offspring, and sons who murder their fathers?

Why this fury of lust firing our veins, which burns up our blood and butchers us as well as

[1] See Chapter III., p. 25.

enervates us, and which, under the deceitful name of love, multiplies the crimes of mankind?

To escape from soul torments, I shut out every book, I enter a church, I cast myself upon my knees with all the faithful and I try to unite myself to their prayers in order to believe, love and worship like them. And lo! my spirit, in spite of me, goes forth and carries me far from the Temple wherein I had sought a refuge and from the altar where I had hoped to recognize and feel God's presence.

The book, read yesterday, again comes up before me importunate, without pity, hateful, but rushing in and overpowering, to murmur objections into my ears, dreadful Whys that stop the prayer upon my lips and choke off my worship. However, I open the Gospel, which I carry about with me, and by divine permission, by divine chance, my eyes fall upon a page of the Passion. I love that story of dying sorrow, and when I come to the cry of anguish, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" it seems that my troubles cease, and seeing Christ sharing in my sufferings I grow calmer near his cross, around which, as in our two souls, profound darkness is falling.

If the Light was shut out from the eyes of Him who said, "I am the Light of the World," and if he asked "Why?" without receiving any answer, how can a weak man like me not have his hours of darkness and his days of gloom? Let us, then, use our reason and labor to have a grain of philosophy and our own trials will not plunge us into this dread, and the sufferings of mankind will not lead us to

doubt of the goodness of God. We long to know the wherefore of all things; it is a longing inherent in the nature of our minds, anxious for truth; it is a need of our hearts, which injustice revolts and sufferings shock.

But if the meaning of details is lacking, have we not the general source of all explanations? Do not reason and faith tell us that God is sovereignly wise and infinitely good? If all the mysteries were unveiled, what merit should we have in believing and should we not lose the blessedness promised by Jesus Christ to those who believe and see not? It is not in the time of trial but in the day of reward that to our vanished sight will appear the harmony of the divine plan, the providential reasons of our sorrows, the evidence, the splendor, the brightness of Infinite Goodness. The human heart has sorrow still more cruel than the sufferings of the mind.

I will not attempt to enumerate these here, or even to give an idea of them. Who is the man who, at certain times of his life and quite often perhaps, has not in tears repeated the cry, so touching, of the priest at the foot of the altar: "O my Soul, why art thou sad and why troublest thou me?"

In the outbursts of my sorrow I cry for help and no one answers. In heaven no one hears me, and on earth none comes to my aid.

Despite my prayers, sorrow physical or moral, accomplishes in me its pitiless work. Things and events follow their courses and nature's inexorable laws over-ride me without hearing my groans or seeing my tears. Nowhere does God show Himself or step in when His creature in distress calls

upon Him. Is he deaf and pitiless? If he hears me, why does he not deliver me? If He hears me not, can we say that He exists?

Everything goes against my wishes and my hopes. I wished to do good and I did evil. I sought goodness and it fled from me. The soul whom I loved Death has snatched from me. It was the child of my love. Yesterday he filled everything with his shouts of joy, and at evening I gazed upon him with rapture when he slept in his cradle. To-day his large open eyes see me not, no breath issues from his lips, and to-morrow this masterpiece of beauty, this wonder of grace, must be thrown, like vile carrion, to the worms of the tomb. Where is the priest who has not heard from the lips of unhappy unfortunates of every sort that heartbreaking word: "But you see indeed how Providence abandons me."

I built my life and rested my future upon a love approved of God and suddenly, without reason and against all reason, without justice and against all justice, the edifice of my goodness goes to pieces. My joy is gone, the light is vanished from my view, my soul has lost its soul, and I remain alone in a world without sunshine, in an atmosphere where I breathe no longer.

It is a summary of all those despairs which Jesus gathered together in that time whose length is unknown but which has lasted long enough to bring home the unspeakable sorrow of supreme desolation. He wished to taste by himself what the poor human creature suffers that no longer sees anything, no longer knows anything, no longer believes in anything, no longer confides in any one,

and never again looks for remedy or comfort or consolation.

He desired to try even that frightful despair which takes hold of a man when trapped, if the expression is permissible, by everything surrounding him; he withdraws into himself in a gloomy sadness, in an insurmountable and complete disgust. What say I? In sorrow and disgust. At times a sort of bitter rage follows and then man, writhing in his sorrow, turns against God and in his folly seeks to find comfort in blaspheming.

Jesus wished to give out this cry because realizing how many unfortunates would not be able to keep it from their lips; he excused in advance their despair by lamenting like them.

O dearly beloved Savior, your voice will mount higher than that of the despairing souls; even to the end of time it will shield the sad reëcho of the murmurs and curses which excess of sorrow provokes too often from our weakness; it will be as the shield of human blasphemy.

To know the souls of those in despair and to be able to win them for yourself and save them, you wished to be like unto them and become their equal in misery; to withdraw them from the abyss, you courageously descended with them.[1]

The Abbé Perraud had planned to write as a sequel to the "Meditations on the Seven Words" a work which would be called "Words of Eternal Life." In it he intended to comment upon all the words of the Savior regarding Heaven, ex-

[1] IV. Meditation on the word: "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" pp. 111–120.

plaining them from the teaching of the great theologians. The problems of the future life possessed for him a mysterious attraction; and when he was held up by some difficulty in which the theologian seemed to be lacking, "Surely," he would say, with his sweet smile, "I shall have to go there myself in order to understand." [1]

A great source of comfort, a renowned preacher, a director much sought after, Charles Perraud was at that time loaded with stipends and presents. The fortune which he no longer needed he gave to a work for a long time dear to him, viz.: the work devoted to the comfort of those born in sorrow and without hope of remedy, loaded with sorrow for the whole of life, incurable children.[2]

[1] Lacroix, as above, p. 21.

[2] Charles Perraud's friends declare that by his public sermons and private begging he secured more than 400,000 francs for the Home of Incurables, rue Lecourbe. He was president of the Ladies' Committee, and whenever he was going to speak in favor of this charity he loved to pass an entire day among those helpless children in order to fill himself with his subject. On leaving he would say, "This house is truly a paradise of sorrow." Lacroix, as above, p. 14.

For the history of the Home, rue Lecourbe, see Maxime du Camp, "La charité privée à Paris," chapter on Scrofulous Children.

IX

DEATH

1892

At the opening of 1892 Charles Perraud was stricken with pneumonia. The attack frightened all his friends and soon shattered their hopes. On January 10th the bishop of Autun was by his bedside and left it no more until the end. January 13th, the sixty-first year of his age, the dying man, in spite of a slightly apparent improvement, wished to receive from his brother the last sacraments. "It is an example," he said. "It is at least fit that we ourselves do what we teach the faithful." [1]

After that day he received Communion more than once. Some chosen friends took turns in the sick man's bedroom or parlor. Others came daily, and even often during the day, to ask for news. Charles Perraud received all and said his farewells to all, thus carrying out the programme he seemed to have drawn in the last of the "Meditations on the Seven Words."

Wait not to say farewell to them whom you leave and to salute those who on high await you, or till your poor body wears itself out in its last convul-

[1] Lacroix, p. 30.

sions and the final tortures of its agony. Wait not until all your strength is gone and your exhausted body drags your soul along with itself into an irresistible and unconquerable sleep. On the contrary, those who see death coming should always be the first to break that sad, dismal, decisive silence which too often surrounds and darkens the hour which Light eternal should have already illumined.

Is it not to him who is the highest in dignity that belongs the word first of all?

Does it not belong to the superior to instruct his subjects?

Now whatever be the inequality of conditions and difference even of ages in the death-chamber, it is the dying man who has the first place.

Find not they who die like Jesus Christ, for the comfort and encouragement of those whom they leave, a penetration, a power of voice, at times even a majesty, which astonishes and overcomes?

Then on the threshold of Eternity, the soul which "sees God from death's other side" notices the earth with its joys and its sorrows only as a hazy point.

It hears no longer the noise of the crowd or the buzz of conversation or earthly affairs. It gives its attention only to the mysterious and pressing appeals of the Spouse who is coming to invite it to sit at the eternal banquet.[1]

Sunday morning, January 17th, Charles Perraud gave to Père Largent his farewells and last

[1] Méditations sur les sept paroles: Seventh Meditation: Filial abandonment into the Divine hands, pp. 211–213.

requests: "I believe," he said, in a hesitating voice, "that I will not recover. In spite of my sins I die with an unfailing confidence in God's mercy. Often men are thought better than they really are and no one prays for such. For a long while we have loved one another. Pray for me and for my part, if God, as I trust, be merciful to me, I will pray for you. I am going to bless you and together with you Père Lescœur and the entire Oratory."

He blessed him. Père Largent kissed the dying man's hands and forehead and then withdrew.

January 18th, about five o'clock in the evening, Père Largent returned. The bishop of Autun met him and said: "Let us now pray, for the time is shortening. His agony begins." Père Largent took and kissed the hand of Charles Perraud, who blessed him in silence.

The last hours of the closing day of the dying man have been told by the Abbé Planus, Secretary of the bishop of Autun, who attended the prelate.

"The coming stroke was visibly evident. Towards midday his breathing, short, jerky, audible, seemed to portend the beginning of the end. A calm followed. The dying man grew weary thus to be brought back, as he was about to reach the end. He was weary, but he lost nothing either of his mind's brightness or his courageous firmness. We may say that he kept his faculties to the end — he was master of himself. To the

end he blessed his friends. Yes, doubtless also the little ones, the humble, especially the poor,— his old servant, a boy of the neighborhood who had waited upon him, and the janitor. 'To preach to the poor he sent me. *Evangelizare pauperibus misit me.*'"

When it was seen that the end was at hand, the bishop said the liturgical prayers "for a soul in agony." Then Charles asked him to read in a high voice the Litanies of a Good Death from the Diurnal of the Marchioness of Andelarre which he had kept as a relic.

"The sick man," says M. Planus, "listened carefully to every word, for he himself had whispered them to the dying. Not having strength enough to answer, 'Merciful Jesus, be merciful to me,' he was content at every aspiration to touch the crucifix to his lips and kiss it. The bishop suggested to his brother pious thoughts and aspirations, which were mainly scriptural. At the last moment he repeated for him the cry of St. John in the Apocalypse, XXII, 20, 'Come, Lord Jesus,'— the supreme cry which marked the close of divine revelations and with which should end the Christian life."

The bishop spoke again to the dying man, "My dear child, our mother brought you into the world for the present life, and myself, I will not leave you until you have entered the portals of Eternity."

"Yes," answered the dying man in a weak

voice. Two or three breaths slower and weaker followed, and then all was over.[1]

Charles Perraud wished the Gospel which he had constantly used to be placed in the coffin upon his breast. He drew up the details of his funeral in his last will, as follows:

I declare my express wish that at my funeral service, only such as a Little Sister of the Poor has, shall be carried out. My universal legatee and the executor of my Will will pay to the Curé of the parish a sum equal to the cost of a first-class funeral, the same to be given to the poor. In the most formal way I forbid any flowers or crowns to be placed upon my death-bed or my bier in the church." [2]

His wishes were carried out.

On Wednesday, January 20th, at his own parish church of Saint Pierre-du-Gros-Caillou, the corpse rested between four candles upon the bier used for the poor. Chants there were, but the singers were the little incurables of the rue Lecourbe,— poor children, blind, weak, crippled, whose great number filled the side aisles. The large gathering gave proof of the love and sympathy which the dead man inspired. Besides the dignitaries of the church, there were present Marshal MacMahon, former President of the Repub-

[1] Lacroix, p. 4.

[2] He died January 18th, about 5 o'clock in the evening.

lic, Duke Albert de Broglie, Camille Rousset, Sully-Prudhomme, Count d'Haussonville, Viscount de Vogué, all of the French Academy; Henry Wallon, Life Secretary of the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles-Lettres; Mons. Georges Picot, of the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences; August Nisard, Mons. Henry Schneider, Mons. de Lamarzelle, Senator Adrian Hebrard, many men and women of society, many youths who had frequented the churches where he preached.

On leaving the church, en route to the cemetery of Mont Parnasse, the bishop of Autun, who had conducted the services, turning around cast over the long and distinguished procession a satisfied eye.[1]

That same day M. Hyacinthe Loyson, who was unwell, wrote in his journal:

20th,— 11 A. M. At this hour the body of my poor friend leaves the church for the cemetery. I was too much in pain to be present at the funeral. A sun, reddish and rayless, cast at the moment a very sweet and sad glimmer upon his bier. A soul upright, pure, but weak, who had not the courage to take part with me.

And he sent to the bishop of Autun the following note:

[1] This fact was related to me by an eye witness, friend and follower of the dead man. Charles Perraud was burried in the same tomb as his father and mother, south section, grave No. 2, West, line 4th south, 12th division.

The blow which strikes you so cruelly, Monseigneur, strikes me also, and very sorrowfully. I retain for you my esteem and my sympathy, but the dear dead one remains for me the friend of other days.

We suffered the same abuses, we shared the same regrets and the same desires, and as he said to me not so long ago, we were indeed "of the same church."

I myself, who to the end had his confidence, can say that he was not merely a just man, but a martyr.

Detained by an illness which might take a serious turn, I could not assist to-day at his funeral. I wish to say to you that in mind, in heart, in prayer, I was, and am one with you as with him.

X

CONCLUSION

1892–1894

Twice after the death of Charles Perraud, M. Hyacinthe Loyson asked the bishop of Autun to kindly return to him the documents which he had formerly entrusted to him, as also the letters he had written. The bishop answered thus:

PARIS, 13 Avenue Duquesne,
January 25, 1892.

Monsieur:

Hardly yet have I been able to begin to take up the sad material details which result from that sorrowful separation. However, after receiving your two letters I made a search which gave no result. My brother was little of a collector and habitually destroyed the letters which he had answered. Be assured that if further search lead me to find the documents you wrote to me about I will forward them to you speedily in return for the letters from him now in your hands.

To this answer called forth by your request, kindly be not offended if I add a few lines. These, I fancy, were dictated to me by him whose supreme immolation I witnessed and sustained for nine days. He had the grace of a death, admirable before men and, as I have the consoling hope, precious in God's sight. His most tender and most merciful soul

pitied the situation, so sad, in which you have been for more than twenty years, which brought the Church, your mother, to shed so many tears, as have also so many friends, known and unknown. But her charity so compassionate could not blind her to the rights of all-pervading truth! Oh! could those voices from beyond the tomb, of our dear friend, Perreyve, Gratry and his own — those voices which speak not the language of earth's brawls and disputes — be heard in your soul before that final combat in the agony and the supreme crisis of death, when he found it so good — as St. Theresa put it — of being able to rest upon the bosom of the Church, the deposit and channel of infinite mercy.

Receive, monsieur, the expression of the very sincere sentiments which the charity of Jesus Christ inspires me for you.

ADOLPHE-LOUIS,
Bishop of Autun.

At the time he received this letter, M. Hyacinthe Loyson was suffering from a swelling which had taken on all at once a dangerous development and which called for an operation. He could not then answer. Madame Loyson did so. She called to the bishop's notice how his brother, the Abbé Perreyve, and the Père Gratry were a poor choice to upbraid more or less directly Père Hyacinthe with his open and legal marriage.[1]

[1] On learning that Père Hyacinthe Loyson would pass the winter of 1896–97 in Rome with his family, Leo XIII wished to take advantage of his presence to regain to the Church the great preacher. The Pope sent Prince Bal-

The Abbé Charles had contracted a secret marriage. Perreyve died in despair. As to Père Gratry, during the years 1870–71, that is, shortly before his death, he had shown a great affection for a lady whom the bishop of Autun knew well and this affection would have wound up in marriage if the said lady had consented to it.[1]

The bishop answered in the following note:

Sunday, February 7th, 1892.

Madame E. Hyac. Loyson will not be surprised, I think, if I simply acknowledge the reception of the registered letter which came to hand this morning. To answer it would be a task too cruel and, moreover, entirely useless. All that is past is left to God's justice and mercy, upon which I confide and depend.

In spite of all the search — the most minute — I have found no documents that M. H. L. asked of me just after the death of my brother.

In case he would find it apropos, I would thank him to return to me the latter's letters. I will still be all the week in Paris at 52 Boulevard Male-

tassare Odescalchi and the Capuchin friar, who is now Cardinal Vives y Tuto. To Père Hyacinthe they offered permission to take up again the priestly functions, while retaining his wife and son on the sole condition that he accept Papal Infallibility. In order to legitimize the marriage the Pope proposed to affiliate Père Hyacinthe to an Oriental Church, whose priests are married. A personal friend said: "Sign everything, sign without even reading. These are formulas of the Church and formulas are only formulas." Père Hyacinthe refused. (Houtin, Le Crise du Clergé, 2nd Edition, p. 99.— Tr.).

[1] This lady was still living, September 1st, 1909.— Tr.

sherbes. I learned with sorrow from the newspaper of the painful and dangerous operation he underwent. I express to him, as also to yourself, Madame, my best wishes.[1]

M. Hyacinthe Loyson replied not and kept his friend's letters. So the bit of a sermon that the bishop of Autun took upon himself to give to his brother's correspondent kept him from securing curious documents, which he would have surely destroyed.

A few days later M. Hyacinthe Loyson sent the following reply:

February 11th.

MONSIGNOR:

In some measure am I now able to resume my correspondence. One of my first thoughts is of you; but upon reading your letter and its answer to Madame Loyson, I have nothing to add. It is clear that you are but poorly in touch with affairs.

The life of your brother I knew in detail. I refer to his real life, the life he passed through amid sufferings, not that of the conventional, pious romance, which perhaps may be supplied as a substitute. I did not approve all of it, but I understood the whole of it: I add even that in a way I respected it. That life is in my eyes one of the most

[1] The letter is unsigned. The address was, Mme. Emilie Hyac. Loyson, Neuilly (Seine), 29 Boulevard Inkermann. In his journal, M. Loyson notes thus how he received this letter: "Fine answer of the bishop of Autun. One of the most painful afflictions of my life was separation from such men. The higher claims of truth exacted it."

touching and most sorrowful pages of contemporary church history.

The dear dead one's letters have ever been too dear to me to be parted with. You appeal to my conscience and to death. My conscience is at peace and I have just faced death. The great fault of the Roman Church is to put itself above the truth. The lawful role and true dignity of authority is to serve truth, not to be served by it.

The church, out of which there is no salvation, is not that which kisses the cross of Jesus Christ upon the Pope's slipper, but the church truly catholic, the church universal, the spouse of the Saviour, the congregation of the saints. Beyond Jesus Christ, knowingly and freely rejected, there is no salvation.

May God grant you to see this light, in which I am confident that we shall meet each other, if not on this side of death, at least on the other, whitherward has preceded us your brother and my friend.

HYACINTHE LOYSON,
Priest.

During September, 1894, M. Hyacinthe Loyson re-read Charles Perraud's letters. He was so moved by them that he could not keep from sending to the bishop of Autun the following note, of which his journal has kept a copy:

September 15th, 1894.

MONSEIGNEUR AND OLD FRIEND:

I re-read the letters of your dear and unhappy brother. In that which he wrote me on June 1st, 1878, the eve of a conference at the Cirque d'hiver,

delivered by him in lay dress, he said to me: "Courage; all the same, dear friend, say what you think without fear of anything whatsoever; there lies your soul's strength, your true honor, and take for your motto: 'Si Deus pro nobis, quis contra nos?' It is necessary in the time in which we are *to have almost the whole world against oneself in order to be in the truth.*"[1]

In other letters he speaks to me in a manner, at once touching and heartbreaking, of her whom he loved, Madame Duval, to whom he was secretly married and whom he himself assisted at her death at Pau.

I could never approve the secretness of that union, but I had for them a sad respect, for force lacked both the one and the other to act as their duty demanded openly before God and man.

You can not be completely ignorant of those things, Monseigneur, and this is why you strangely misunderstood me when, to bring me back to the system of falsehood and slavery which made a long and painful martyr of your brother and my friend, you quote me his example, and at the same time those equally objectionable of Père Gratry and the Abbé Perreyve.

O God! When will be torn aside those veils that hide the truth of history in the Church of to-day as in that of heretofore.

You are wrong, Monseigneur, in placing at the service of such a system your nobleness of character,

[1] The original of this letter still exists. I did not quote it above in its proper place because to me it seemed not to fall in with the narrative.

your talent with the word and the pen. You voluntarily blind yourself, in order to declare afterwards that such is the joyful and holy freedom which Jesus Christ purchased for us and such the Kingdom of God that he established upon earth. Judaism was better worth.

By return of post the bishop answered. His letter, to-day lost or mislaid, touched M. Hyacinthe Loyson, who made this reply:

September 17th, 1894.

MONSEIGNEUR AND OLD FRIEND:

I wished not to re-open your wound, but the reading of the letter I referred to has more than once, and indeed cruelly also, recalled my own. Behold why, in a moment of profound anger that I could not master, I wrote you the lines of which you complain:

My indignation was not against your brother, who was one of my best friends. For him I had only affection, respect, pity. It was directed against a system among whose leaders you are one of the most eminent, and of which he was one of the most lamentable victims, a system which killed him after having forced his soul — one of the most upright I ever knew — into deeds in no wise upright.

I reminded you of his marriage. But how could I add of his acceptance of Papal Infallibility, such as he himself explained it to me, after he was created an honorary Canon of Autun: "The Pope is infallible when he speaks *ex cathedra,* but we lack the criterion to discern when he speaks in that

way." When, after the death of his former confessor, he looked for another who could understand and accept his state of soul, it was I who suggested to him Père Cédoz.

I saw not your brother in his last illness, and my wife, who was a friend of his, received him in my absence when he paid us a visit a little while before. Doubtless the sharp crisis which he had undergone had passed off, but there was nothing to show me that he had changed his way of seeing and feeling.

Console yourself, however, Monseigneur, for God — the true God, not the idol — in order to receive souls unto the fulness of his light and his love, demands not the strange conditions that you suppose and that can be summed up in the casting down of reason and of conscience at the feet of a false, abusive human authority.

There, on the contrary, lies the chief error and the great crime of Roman Catholicism, and it is in striking them with the double edged sword that it kills souls, whether those it drives from God or those it subjects to man.

Be well assured, Monseigneur, that I wished not to cause you pain. I fancied that you would understand the truth perhaps some day and accept it. At all events, I thought it a duty to say these things to you.

Such are the documents which have led to the writing of this sketch of Canon Charles Perraud's career. Sad it was, but his soul, free of bitterness, preserved the supernatural hope. He has

given a resume of his earthly deceptions on the lines which seem to embody his career as a preacher.[1]

One day, at the opening up of youth, without hesitating, say I, rather with the most confident enthusiasm, are sacrificed all the happiness and all earthly hope to preach the Gospel in order to convert and save souls. Neither upon his power nor upon his personal eloquence depends the new and eloquent apostle, but upon the divine winsomeness of Christ's doctrine; upon the supernatural charm of His promises; upon the ravishing light of His revelations.

Does not the Gospel embrace all truth, all power, all hope, all solace? Is it not the secret of earthly progress and prosperity at the same time that it opens to us the sight of heaven and helps us to ascend toward God?

With also what a charming mixture of hardihood and fear of precocious gravity and youthful artlessness the preacher makes his bow before the assembled faithful. What matters his lack of experience and his weakness; he will have only to hold up the Gospel wide open and say, Behold how divinely lovely is Christ, and all the world will be won.

But behold, his church is half empty, while among those who come to hear him the greater part listen but listlessly to his preaching.

Finally, in spite of all efforts, the poor zealous

[1] "Méditations sur les sept paroles": Fifth Meditation, on the words, I thirst. Pp. 147–149.

shepherd of souls perceives that the Faith has not grown in his parish, that morals are not bettered, and that in the greater number of souls entrusted to him God holds a much smaller place than vanity, pleasure and money.

Broaden out the horizon, and the famous bishop or renowned preacher will admit that they have little else than sorrows and disillusions.

Then to these apostolic souls, blasted in their noblest hopes, thwarted in their noblest efforts, what temptation to despair, what manner of sorrowful amazement, what longing desire, of which God alone is the witness and which God only will reward.

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